

The Intelligibility of Malaysian English : a Study of Some
Features of Spoken English Produced by University Students
in Malaysia.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE MALAYSIAN BACKGROUND

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.1	Historical Background	1
1.2	Present-day Situation	3
1.3	Language Policy in Malaysia : the Past, the Present and the Forseeable Future	4
1.3.1	Language Policy in Malaysia : the Past	4
1.3.2	Language Policy in Malaysia : the Present	9
1.3.3	Language Policy in Malaysia : the Forseeable Future	12
1.4	The Role of Spoken English in Malaysia Today	13
1.4.1	The Role of Spoken English in the Mass Media	13
1.4.2.	The Role of Spoken English in Trade and Business	15
1.4.3	The Role of Spoken English in Government Services	16
1.4.4	The Role of Spoken English in Higher Education	17
1.5	Varieties of Malaysian English : An Overview	17
1.5.1	Standard ME/the Wider Speech-form/MEI	19
1.5.2	Sub-standard ME/the Local Dialect/MEII	22
1.5.3	ME and International Intelligibility	25
1.6	Choosing a Model/Models of English for Teaching Purposes in Malaysia - the Problems	26
1.6.1	The Concept of 'Model'	26
1.6.2	Nonnative Varieties of English and the Question of Recognition and Acceptability	27
1.6.3	Choosing a Model/Models of English for Teaching Purposes in Malaysia	30
1.6.4	A Model of Spoken English at University Level in Malaysia and its Relevance to the Present Study	34
Notes		36

CHAPTER TWOON INTELLIGIBILITYTABLE OF CONTENTS

2.1	The Definition of Intelligibility	37
2.2	The Parameters of Intelligibility	39
2.3	The Degree of Intelligibility	40
2.4	Factors Influencing Intelligibility	41
2.4.1	Regional/Sociolinguistic Factors	41
2.4.2	Physiological Factors	41
2.4.3	Extralinguistic or Non-linguistic Factors	42
2.4.4	Paralinguistic Factors	42
2.4.5	Linguistic Factors	43
2.5	Previous Research on Intelligibility	44
2.5.1	Measurement of Intelligibility of Native Speaker's Speech	44
2.5.1.1	Measurement of Intelligibility of Segmental Items : Vowels	44
2.5.1.2	Measurement of Intelligibility of Supra-Segmental Items : Stress	45
2.5.1.3	Measurement of Speech Intelligibility in Different Levels of Noise	45
2.5.1.4	Measurement of Effects of the Listener's Anticipation on the Intelligibility of Heard Speech	46
2.5.1.5	Measurement of Intelligibility of Speech with and without Context	47
2.5.1.6	Measurement of the Effects of Rate of Utterance and Duration of Excerpt on Intelligibility	48
2.5.2	Measurement of Intelligibility of Non-native Speaker's Speech	48
2.5.2.1	Measurement of Intelligibility of Segmental and Suprasegmental Elements in Learner's Speech	48
2.5.2.2	Measurement of Intelligibility Using Speech Characteristics as Criteria	49

2.5.2.3	Measurement of Intelligibility of English Speech to Nonnative Speakers	50
2.5.2.4	Measurement of Intelligibility in Relation to Aural Comprehension	50
2.5.2.5	Measurement of Mutual Intelligibility through Different Varieties of English	51
2.5.2.6	Measurement of Learner's Spoken Interlanguage through Oral Interviews	53
2.5.3	Measurement of Intelligibility of Specific Varieties of Nonnative English Speech to Native and Nonnative Speakers of English	54
2.5.3.1	Indian English	54
2.5.3.2	Ghananian English	55
2.5.3.3	Nigerian English	56
2.5.3.4	Tanzanian English	57
2.6	Criteria for Determining Speech Intelligibility between NSs and NS-NNSs	58
2.7	The Concept of Intelligibility in the Present Study	62
Notes		65
2.6	Diagram 2.1 Criteria for Determining Speech Intelligibility between NSs of English	60
2.6	Diagram 2.2 Criteria for Determining Speech Intelligibility : NNS to NSs of English	61

CHAPTER THREE

THE DATA AND RESEARCH PROCEDURE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3.1	Intelligibility Test Materials	67
3.1.1	Choosing A corpus	67
3.1.2	The Selection and Description of the Data	69
3.1.2.1	The Main Corpus: Oral Interviews (Data Collection One)	69
3.1.2.2	The Subsidiary Corpora: Reading of Words and Sentences (Data Collection Two); Summary (Data Collection Three)	74
3.2	The Listening Procedure	75
3.2.1	The Selection of Listeners	75
3.2.2	The Method of Listening: D.C. One and D.C. Two	77
3.3	The Scoring System: Oral Interviews	79
3.4	The Scoring Procedure: Oral Interviews	81
3.5	Intelligibility Scores	84
3.6	Analysis of the Main Corpus: An Overview	91
3.7	The Nature of the Main Corpus	92
3.7.1	Some Terminology Used in the Main Corpus	92
3.7.2	Discourse Structure of the Oral Interviews	99
3.7.2.1	Verbal and Non-verbal Behaviour in the Oral Interviews	99
3.7.2.2	Oral Interview Versus Casual/Informal Conversation	99
3.7.2.3	Application of Sinclair and Coulthard's System of Analysis	104
3.1.2.1	Table 3.1 Background knowledge of subjects	71
3.2.1	Table 3.2 Allocation and background knowledge of listeners	76
3.3	Table 3.3 The Intelligibility rating scale	80
3.4	Table 3.4 Units of utterances and number of words in oral interviews	82
3.5	Table 3.5 The breakdown of intelligibility scores of each listener with each subject	85
3.5	Table 3.6 Mean Score of utterances rated ++h, +h, h, and -h, --h	89
3.5	Table 3.7 Mean Score of utterances rated at the 5 degrees of Intelligibility (each ethnic group)	90
3.5	Table 3.8 Mean Score of utterances rated at the 5 degrees of intelligibility (all subjects)	90
3.7.1	Table 3.9 Areas of discourse analysis and their relevance to this study	96
Notes		107

3.1.2.1	Appendix A(1)	Transcription of Oral Interviews in Orthography	364
3.4	Appendix A(2)	Utterance Number of the Units of Utterance in Oral Interviews	378
3.1.2.2	Appendix B(1)	Reading of Words from Oral Interviews	389
3.1.2.2	Appendix B(2)	Reading of Sēntences	390

CHAPTER FOUR

INTELLIGIBILITY AND ERRORS AT THE PHONOLOGICAL LEVEL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4.1	Segmental Errors and Intelligibility	108
4.2	Criteria for Assessing Segmental Errors and Their Correlation with Intelligibility	110
4.2.1	Definition of Segmental Errors	110
4.2.2	Grouping of Segmental Errors	111
4.2.3	Classification of Segmental Error Types	111
4.2.4	Degrees of Intelligibility	112
4.2.5	Information Included in Appendixes D (1), D (2) and D (3)	114
4.3	Analysis of Results	115
4.3.1	General Remarks	115
4.3.2	Intelligibility and Lexical/Function words	115
4.3.3	Intelligibility and Mono/Di/Polysyllabic Lexical Words	115
4.3.4	Intelligibility and Number and Type of Segmental Errors	116
4.3.5	Intelligibility and Error Type, Error Frequency and Error Gravity	116
4.3.6	Hierarchy of Error Gravity in the Three Ethnic Groups	118
4.3.7	Segmental Error Types and Ethnic Origin of Subjects	122
4.3.8	Common Segmental Errors Among the Three Ethnic Groups and Intelligibility	124
4.3.9	Other Segmental Errors of the Three Ethnic Groups and Intelligibility	126
4.4	Phonological/Contextual Factors and Intelligibility	130
4.5	Suprasegmental Errors and Intelligibility	134
4.5.1	Definition of Suprasegmental Errors	134
4.5.2	Word Stress in English	134
4.5.3	Stress Errors and Intelligibility	136
4.5.4	Stress Patterns of the Subjects	137
4.5.4.1	Word Stress Patterns of Chinese Subjects and Intelligibility	137
4.5.4.2	Word Stress Patterns of Malay Subjects and Intelligibility	139

4.5.4.3	Word Stress Patterns of Indian Subjects and Intelligibility	142
4.5.5	Rhythm and Intonation of English	146
4.5.5.1	Rhythm	146
4.5.5.2	Rhythmic 'Errors' and Intelligibility	147
4.5.5.3	Intonation: (i) Tone Group, Tonality and Tonicity (ii) Tones	148
4.5.5.4	Intonation 'Errors' and Intelligibility	154
4.5.6	Rhythmic and Intonation Patterns of the Subjects	155
4.5.6.1	Rhythmic Patterns of Chinese and Malay Subjects and Their Influence on English	155
4.5.6.2	Rhythmic Patterns of Indian Subjects and Their Influence on English	157
4.5.6.3	Rhythmic 'Errors' of the Subjects and Intelligibility	159
4.5.7	Tonality and Tonicity of the Subjects' Speech: (i) Tonicity, (ii) Tonicity 'Errors' and Intelligi- bility, (iii) Tonality, (iv) Tonality 'Errors' and Intelligibility	161
4.5.8	Other Related Features: (i) Absence of Contracted Forms, (ii) Absence of Weak Forms, (iii) Absence of Liaison	165
4.5.9	Tones of the Subjects' Speech	167
4.5.9.1	Tones in Malay	167
4.5.9.2	Tones in Chinese	169
4.5.9.3	Tones in Tamil	170
4.5.9.4	Differing Intonation Patterns of the Subjects and Intelligibility	170
Notes		174
4.2.3	Table 4.1 Classification of Segmental Error types	112
4.2.4	Table 4.2 Intelligibility rating scale for segmental errors	113
4.3.5	Table 4.3 Frequency of degrees of intelligibility of error types and error gravity	117
4.3.6	Table 4.4 Frequency of degrees of intelligibility and error gravity (Chinese Subjects)	119

4.3.6	Table 4.5	Frequency of degrees of intelligibility and error gravity (Malay Subjects)	120
4.3.6	Table 4.6	Frequency of degrees of intelligibility and error gravity (Indian Subjects)	121
4.3.7	Table 4.7	Error types, error frequency and ethnic origin	123
4.2.1	Appendix C (1)	Phonetic symbols used for transcription	392
4.2.1	Appendix C (2)	Phonetic symbols used for transcribing subjects' mispronunciation	394
4.5.6.2	Appendix C (3)	Prosodic notation	395
4.2.5	Appendix D (1)	Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Chinese Subjects)	396
4.2.5	Appendix D (2)	Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Malay Subjects)	402
4.2.5	Appendix D (3)	Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Indian Subjects)	408

CHAPTER FIVEINTELLIGIBILITY AND ERRORS AT THE SYNTACTIC AND LEXICAL LEVELSTABLE OF CONTENTS

5.1	Recent studies on Error Gravity at Syntactic and Lexical levels	176
5.1.1	Recent Research on Error Gravity in Indo-European Languages	176
5.1.2	Recent Research on Error Gravity in the English Language	177
5.2	Criteria for Evaluating Syntactic and Lexical Errors in the Main Corpus and their Effects on Intelligibility	182
5.2.1	Definition of Syntactic and Lexical Errors	182
5.2.2	Grouping of Syntactic and Lexical Errors	182
5.2.3	Classification of Syntactic Error Types	183
5.2.4	Degrees of Intelligibility	186
5.2.5	Information Included in Appendixes E(1) and E(2)	186
5.2.6	Classification of Lexical Errors	187
5.2.7	Degree of Intelligibility	187
5.2.8	Information Included in Appendix E (3)	188
5.3	Analysis of Results	188
5.3.1	General Remarks	188
5.3.2	Intelligibility and Syntactic Errors	189
5.3.2.1	Analysis of Appendix E (1)	189
5.3.2.2	Analysis of Appendix E (2)	191
5.3.3	Intelligibility and Single/Multiple Syntactic Errors	193
5.3.4	Intelligibility and Error Frequency	193
5.3.5	Hierarchy of Error Gravity of Syntactic Errors	193
5.3.6	Syntactic Error Types and Ethnic Origin of Subjects	196
5.3.7	Intelligibility and Lexical Errors	198
5.3.8	Intelligibility and Other Lexical Items: (i) Fillers; (ii) Code-Switching	199
5.4	General Conclusion and Some Limitations	201

5.2.3	Table 5.1	Classification of syntactic error types	184
5.2.4	Table 5.2	Intelligibility rating scale for syntactic errors	186
5.2.7	Table 5.3	Intelligibility rating scale for lexical errors	187
5.3.2.1	Table 5.4	Total number of ratings of syntactic errors mostly rated +h and their percentages	189
5.3.2.2	Table 5.5	Total number of ratings of syntactic errors mostly rated -h and --h and their percentages	191
5.3.5	Table 5.6	Statistics indicating hierarchy of error gravity of syntactic errors	194
5.3.5	Table 5.7	Hierarchy of error gravity of syntactic errors in the main corpus	195
5.3.6	Table 5.8	Error types, error frequency and ethnic origin of subjects	196
5.3.6	Table 5.9	Proportional Errors of the three ethnic groups	197
5.2.5	Appendix E (1)	Utterances with syntactic errors which were mostly rated +h	412
5.2.5	Appendix E (2)	Utterances with syntactic errors which were mostly rated -h or --h	415
5.2.8	Appendix E (3)	Utterances with lexical errors rated +h, h, -h, --h	417

INTELLIGIBILITY AND NONLINGUISTIC ELEMENTS AT THE DISCOURSE LEVEL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

6.1	Realization of Meaning in Face-to-Face Interaction	205
6.1.1	Meaning and Verbal/Nonverbal Codes in Face-to-Face Interaction	205
6.1.2	Negotiation of Meaning between Participants of a Face-to-Face Interaction	205
6.1.3	Intelligibility and Lack of Shared Linguistic/Cultural Background between Participants of a Face-to-Face Interaction	207
6.1.4	Intelligibility and Context in Face-to-Face Interactions	208
6.2	Intelligibility and Cross-Cultural Communication	209
6.2.1	Linguistic/Cultural Differences and Intelligibility in Native-Nonnative Interactions	209
6.2.2	Intelligibility and Corrective Procedure for Negotiating Meaning in NS - NNS Interactions	210
6.2.3	Intelligibility and Discourse Organization in NS - NNS Interaction	212
6.3	Intelligibility and NS - NNS Interactions in the Oral Interviews	213
6.3.1	Error Correction in the Oral Interviews	215
6.3.2	Intelligibility and Discourse Organization in the Oral Interviews	216
6.4	Utterance Interpretation and the Role of British Listeners in the Main Corpus	218
6.4.1	Interpretation of Text/Discourse and Schema Theory	218
6.4.2	Conversational Implicatures, Influences and Interpretation of Utterances	221
6.4.3	Coherence and Utterance Interpretation	224
6.5	The Role of the British Listeners in the Main Corpus	225
6.6	Analysis of the British Listeners' Interpretation of Utterances in the Main Corpus	231
6.6.1	Lack of Shared Background or Schematic Knowledge and Intelligibility	232

6.6.2	Shared Knowledge, Knowledge of the World and Intelligibility	233
6.6.3	Context, Background Knowledge and Intelligibility	235
6.6.4	Same Word, Different Contexts and Intelligibility	237
6.6.5	Cohesion and Intelligibility	240
6.6.6	Coherence and Intelligibility	243
6.6.7	Coherence, Discourse Organization and Intelligibility	245
6.6.8	Coherence, Decontextualized Discourse and Intelligibility	247
6.6.9	New/Old Information and Intelligibility	248
6.6.10	'Error Correction' and Interpretation	250
6.6.11	Long/Short Utterances and Intelligibility	252
	Notes	254

CHAPTER SEVENCONSOLIDATION OF FINDINGSTABLE OF CONTENTS

7.1	Data Collection Two (a) : Reading of Words in Isolation	255
7.1.1	Aims of D.C. Two (a)	255
7.1.2	Subjects, Material and Method	255
7.1.3	Results and Discussion	256
7.2	Data Collection Two (b) : Reading of Isolated Sentences	262
7.2.1	Aims of D.C. Two (b)	262
7.2.2	Subjects, Material and Method	262
7.2.3	Results and Discussion	262
7.3	Data Collection Three : Summary	268
7.3.1	Aims of D.C. Three	268
7.3.2	Subjects, Material and Method	268
7.3.3	Areas of Investigation	269
7.3.4	Results and Discussion	269
7.4	Analysis of Intelligibility Problems with Utterances Rated -h and --h in the Main Corpus	278
7.4.1	Some Important Findings in D.C. One, Two and Three	278
7.4.2	Determining the Main Causes of Intelligibility Problems	280
7.4.3	Classification of Intelligibility Problem Areas	290
7.4.4	Results and Discussion	292
7.4.4.1	Statistics from Appendix F	294
7.4.5	Interpretation of Results in Tables 3.5 to 3.8 in Chapter Three	296
7.1.2	Table 7.1 List of words and their transcription in D.C. Two (a)	256
7.2.3	Table 7.2 Erroneous sentences and the corrected counterparts in D.C. Two (b)	263
7.3.4	Table 7.3 Proper names in Oral Interview One	270
7.3.4	Table 7.4 Important information in Oral Interview One	272
7.4.4	Table 7.5 Statistics of utterances rated -h and --h in the Main Corpus	292
7.4.3	Appendix F Analysis of utterances rated -h and --h in the Main Corpus	418

CHAPTER EIGHTREMEDIATION STRATEGIES AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONSTABLE OF CONTENTS

8.1	Intelligibility Problem Areas and the Teaching of Spoken English	299
8.1.1	Segmental Errors Affecting Intelligibility	299
8.1.2	Suprasegmental Errors Affecting Intelligibility	301
8.1.3	Syntactic Errors Affecting Intelligibility	301
8.1.4	Lexical Errors Affecting Intelligibility	302
8.1.5	Discourse Elements Affecting Intelligibility	302
8.2	Other Factors	303
8.2.1	Analysis of Data Collection Four : Listening Test	302
8.2.2	Feedback from Interviews and Survey	308
8.2.3	The Spoken English Course in USM	314
8.3	Remediation Strategies and Teaching Implications	315
8.3.1	The Role of the Teacher	316
8.3.2	The Teaching of Pronunciation in the Malaysian Spoken English Course	320
8.3.2.1	Formal or Informal Instruction	320
8.3.2.2	Factors Influencing the Ultimate Levels of Achievement in Phonology	321
8.3.2.3	Teaching the Production of Segmental Accuracy	323
8.3.2.4	Teaching the Production of Suprasegmental Accuracy	329
8.3.3	The Teaching of Syntax in the Malaysian Spoken English Course	331
8.3.3.1	Formal or Informal Instruction	331
8.3.3.2	Pedagogic Grammar versus Linguistic Grammar	332
8.3.3.3	Selection and Sequencing of Grammatical Structures	333
8.3.3.4	Remedial Teaching on Syntactic Errors that Affected Intelligibility	334
8.3.4	The Teaching of Lexis in the Malaysian Spoken English Course	341
8.3.4.2	Remedial Teaching on Wrong Lexical Choice in Utterances	343
8.3.5	Incorporating Sociocultural Knowledge into the Malaysian Spoken English Course	344

Notes		346
8.2.1	Appendix G (1) Questions on Listening Test	428
6.2.1	Appendix G (2) Analysis of Listening Test	435
8.2.2	Appendix H Survey on Spoken English	468
8.2.3	Appendix I (1) General and Specific Objectives of Spoken English Course	475
8.2.3	Appendix I (2) Samples of Lesson Plans : Intermediate Spoken English	478

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

9.1	ME, International Intelligibility and the Teaching and Learning of Spoken English	349
9.2	Areas for Further Research	352
9.3	Applicability for Findings	353
9.4	A Final Word on Intelligibility	353

Index of Abbreviations, Initials and Symbols

A	answer
App.	appendix
C	Chinese
D.C.	data collection
EFL	English as a foreign language
E.T.	Error types; For segmental error type list, see Table 4.1 on page 112; for syntactic error type list, see Table 5.1 on page 184
ESL	English as a second language
ESM	English of Singapore and Malaysian
I	interviewer / Indian
Int.	interview
int.	intelligibility
L1	first language
L2	second language
List.	listener
M	Malay
ME	Malaysian English
MS	Mean score
No.	number

NS	native speaker
NNS	nonnative speaker
occ.	occurrence
P	page
Phonetic symbols	See Appendixes C (1) and C (2) on page 392, 394
Prosodic notation	Stress, rhythm and intonation symbols, see Appendix C (3) on page 395
Q	question
RP	Received Pronunciation
S	subject / student
S.	section
tot.	total
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia
Utt.	utterance

ABSTRACT

The focus of this investigation was to measure the intelligibility of Malaysian university students' English speech for British native speakers and to analyze the main causes of intelligibility problems. Three collections of data were made for the purpose: (i) ten oral interviews, (ii) reading of words and sentences, (iii) summary. The oral interviews (Data Collection One) were taken as the main corpus for measuring intelligibility and British native speakers were requested to listen to the recording of the interviews. A scoring system consisting of five degrees of intelligibility was devised and the intelligibility scores ranged from 32.8% to 44.5%, with a mean score of 37.5% of utterances causing intelligibility problems for British listeners.

The intelligibility problems were analyzed in the light of (1) linguistic errors in the students' speech, (ii) other factors affecting intelligibility, and were presented at three levels, viz. (1) errors at the phonological level ie segmental and suprasegmental errors, and their relation to intelligibility; (2) errors at the syntactic and lexical levels and their relation to intelligibility; (3) nonlinguistic elements at the discourse level that affected intelligibility.

Five main causes of intelligibility problems were identified, viz. (i) segmental errors, (ii) suprasegmental errors, (iii) syntactic errors, (iv) lexical errors, and (v) discourse factors. It was found that nonlinguistic variables at the discourse level (33.9%) presented the greatest barrier to intelligibility for British listeners, and segmental errors (28.2%) were the next most important factor. Syntactic errors (21.0%) constituted the third important factor, suprasegmental errors (12.1%) were of lesser importance, and lexical errors (4.8%) appeared to be of very minor importance. The results were reinforced by the findings in Data Collection Two (Reading of words and sentences) and Data Collection Three (Summary).

One of the most important findings in the present study was that it was lack of background or schematic knowledge (one of the discourse factors) that contributed most to intelligibility problems for British listeners. This envisages a hypothesis that in native-nonnative speaker interactions, linguistic errors may affect intelligibility to some extent but shared sociocultural experience and practice play a larger role in mutual intelligibility.

The study concluded with some observations and recommendations on the teaching and learning of spoken English in Malaysia in the light of these findings. It is hoped that the findings of the present study may throw light on the teaching and learning of spoken English in similar settings elsewhere.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE MALAYSIAN BACKGROUND

In this introductory chapter, I shall discuss briefly how Malaysia became a multiracial, multilingual country before touching on the language policy and the role of spoken English in the country. This will be followed by a review of the varieties of Malaysian English and the problems of choosing a model of English for teaching purposes. The discussion will then be related to the main purpose of the present study. (1)

1.1. Historical Background

Lying at the cross-roads of South-East Asia, the Malay Peninsula was an ideal place for trade with India, Europe and China. Its strategic geographical position was apparent to European powers ever since the Portuguese first ventured into the East. From 1311, the Portuguese and the Dutch, who held Malacca, controlled the commerce of the Malacca Straits. In the eighteenth century, the British came into contact with what was then known as Malaya, in their search for ports to sell their wares and subsequently ended up with their Straits settlements at Penang in 1786, Province Wellesley in 1800 and Malacca in 1824. Some of the small Malay settlements along the coast grew into trading ports dealing not only with goods from India, China and Siam, but also products from all over the Malay Archipelago, such as tin, gold and pepper. It was trade that brought large immigrant groups of different ethnic backgrounds, speaking a wide range of languages and dialects to the Malay Peninsula.

Pre-British Period Population Pattern

Before the British rule, there were several aboriginal groups in Malaya : Towards the northern parts of the Peninsula were several distinct tribes of Ngritoes, the nomads who were hunters and gatherers and dependent on the jungle and rivers for their food. The largest of the aboriginal groups collectively known as the Senoi, were distributed on the mountains and foothills of the central mountain ranges and they seldom ventured on to the plains. The third group of aborigines, the Jakuns (or known as Proto-Malays) were distributed in the southern lowlands of the Peninsula. Apart from the aborigines, the other major population group in the Peninsula

was formed by the lowland Malays (also known as Coastal Malays) who were distributed on the lowlands and coastal areas. When these 'Malays' first found their way to the Peninsula, overland or later by sea from Indonesia, the river mouths were their focuses of settlement and these focal points became the military, political and economic bases of the heads of each riverine state, the Raja or Sultan, who possessed absolute power. There were, however, no well-defined boundaries between these states. It was through a slow process of absorption of weaker sultanates by stronger ones during the eighteenth century that the nine Malay states which exist today came into being.

The British Period Population Pattern

There were no significant changes in the basic population pattern of the Peninsula between the period of the founding of the Straits settlements and the extension of the British rule to all the Malay states. However, the years between 1874 and the beginning of the Second World War saw an influx of Chinese, Indians and Indonesian immigrants because immigration was encouraged by the British as a necessary means to development. The Chinese flowed into the Peninsula in great numbers to trade and to work in the tin mines and, later, in the rubber plantations and other agricultural enterprises. Most of the Indians in the Peninsula before the establishment of British rule in the Malay states lived in the Straits settlements. The demand for labour created by the new agricultural enterprises and the need for workers to help in the construction of railways and roads brought immigrants from India. Besides these immigrants, other Indian immigrants from the higher economic classes, such as the professionals, merchants, money-lenders and shopkeepers, were also attracted by the good prospects in the Peninsula. The Indonesian immigrants came to the Peninsula with the primary aim of settling on the land as peasant farmers and very few worked in the rubber estates or other larger establishments. The largest numbers of Indonesian migrants arrived in the Peninsula between 1911 and 1940 when land could be acquired for the cultivation of wet paddy, rubber and coconut. In addition, there were also small numbers of European migrants who worked for the British administration.

1.2 Present-day situation

Racially, linguistically, religiously and culturally speaking it is justifiable to claim that Malaysia is a pluralistic society. West Malaysia has a population of 12.25 million : Malays make up 53.1%, Chinese, 35.5%, Indians, 10.6%, Orang Asli (the aborigines collectively known as hill tribes), Eurasians and Europeans, 0.8%. Each ethnic group has its own languages, religions and culture, within which there are other marked subdivisions.

Linguistic Breakdown

Bahasa Malaysia (2), Chinese, Tamil and English are the four main languages spoken in the country and within these local languages, there are numerous dialects and subdialects. The most important language is Bahasa Malaysia, which is not only the national language of Malaysia, but also the most important lingua franca of the country. Whereas the linguistic differences between different groups of Bahasa Malaysia speakers do not normally hinder mutual intelligibility, the differences between the various Chinese dialects spoken in Malaysia, in order of the number of speakers : Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka, Teochiu, Hainanese, Foo-chow, Kwangsai, Heng-hua, Shanghainese, are so great that the speech of these speakers is mutually unintelligible in most cases. The Indian languages spoken in the country are southern Indian languages, viz Tamil, Malayalam, and Telugu as well as northern Indian languages, viz Punjabi, Sinhalese, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and Gujarati. The southern Indian languages account for almost 90% of the total and of these, Tamil is the most predominant language, comprising nearly 80%. English, which is the first language of a fairly small number of Malaysians (3), is now the second most important language of the country and there is no evidence indicating a change in its position in the foreseeable future.

Religion

There are as many religions as there are races in Malaysia. Nearly all Malays are Muslims, and Islam is the national religion of the country. The Chinese are mainly Buddhists, Taoists or a combination of the two. The majority of Indians are Hindus and a minority are Muslims. A fairly large Christian community comprises Chinese, Indians, Eurasians and Europeans. The hill tribes are mainly animists.

Culture

Although Malaysia is officially an Islamic country and intermarriage is claimed to be on the increase, non-Muslims must become Muslim converts if they wish to marry a Muslim Malay. Since the three major races have different religions, they have certain taboos as far as food is concerned. For instance, all Malay Muslims do not eat pork and all Chinese Buddhists and Indian Hindus do not eat beef. The various festivals that the three major races celebrate throughout the year constitute a rich, colourful and meaningful multiracial culture. For instance, the Malays celebrate Hari Raya Haji, the Prophet, Mohamad's Birthday; the Chinese celebrate the Chinese New Year, the Moon Festival; the Indians celebrate Deepavali and Taipusam, the Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter. To encourage all races to join in the celebrations, some major festive seasons are proclaimed public holidays.

1.3 Language Policy in Malaysia: the past, the future and the Foreseeable Future

1.3.1 Language Policy in Malaysia - The Past

The history of language policy in Malaysia is closely linked with the development of the country and its education systems. The three main periods into which the history of the education system is usually divided, can also be applied to the development of the linguistic situation in the country. They are ÷ the Pre-War Period (between 1816 and 1941), the Post-War Period (between 1945 and 1956) and the Period of Independence (between 1957 and 1969).

(i) The Pre-War Period (1816 - 1941)

The current system of education in Malaysia originated from the British administration in the early nineteenth century. The first schools were established by public-spirited individuals, charitable organizations and religious missions and education was considered more of a private than a government function. Four types of school using four languages as medium of instruction were established.

(a) English-Medium Schools

English education was first introduced in Malaya when Penang Free School was established by the Reverend R. S. Hutchins, the Colonial Chaplain of Penang, in 1816. It was free only in the sense of being 'free' or open to pupils of all races and all religions, and this was followed by the Singapore Free School in 1824 and the Malacca Free School in 1826. Financial assistance was obtained from the East India Company and from the members of the Founder's Church. In the mid-nineteenth century, Christian missionaries established more English schools in Penang, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, and mainly catered for the urban population. The general curriculum was geared to produce junior administrative officers to support the British administrative and commercial interests and, thus, a knowledge of English brought economic security and a certain measure of prestige:

Until recently (ie 1933) the demand for pupils from the English-medium schools as clerks was greater than the supply, and a Cambridge Certificate of the Standard VII Certificate was a commercial asset, ensuring a competency in adult life.

(Malaysia : 1933)

(b) Malay-Medium Schools

Malay-medium Schools had their beginnings in the early Koranic schools where the Arabic script was learned through the study of the Koran. The first formal Malay-medium schools were part of the Penang Free School Organization. Initially, they were assisted by the East India Company but later, they were completely taken over by the State government and financial aid came from the British government. No English was taught in the ordinary school hours. The aims of these schools were:

First, to give a general and practical education to those boys who will remain on the land and will find occupation in local agriculture, as well as to those who will find employment in work which does not demand a knowledge of English and secondly, to lay sound educational foundation in the vernacular on which an education in English can be built for those boys who wish to proceed to an English school.

(Malaysia : 1933)

(c) Chinese-Medium Schools

Chinese education had its origin in Singapore in 1819 and more schools were set up in Malaya soon after that. The medium of instruction was various local Chinese dialects, patterned on the traditional village schools in China. It was only after 1911 that the more modern Chinese schools of China were taken as models and in 1920, Mandarin was adopted as the medium of instruction. These schools were assisted by the generosity of individuals, district societies, associations of people from the same part of China, Christian missions and committees of management whose members contributed monthly subscriptions and were responsible for collecting from the public, funds for the upkeep of the schools. English was taught in many of the large schools and some of the smaller ones. The pupils were taught to read & write and to use the abacus for arithmetic. The curriculum was China-orientated and textbooks and teachers were brought from China. From 1924, the government started to provide some financial assistance to some of these schools.

(d) Tamil-Medium Schools

In 1834, Tamil education was offered at a branch school attached to the Singapore Free School. Since most of the Indian population was to be found on estates, the majority of the Tamil-medium schools were established and managed by estate managers, others by Christian missionaries or Tamil bodies and committees. Such schools sprang up during the 1870's in Province Wellesly and later, in Malacca where the estate population created a need. No English was taught in the ordinary school hours. Like the Chinese-medium schools, the curriculum in the Tamil-medium schools was orientated towards India from where most of the teachers were recruited.

During this period, tertiary education was only available at the Raffle's College in Singapore founded in 1928 or at universities overseas.

(ii) The Period of Japanese Occupation (1941 - 1945)

Since the Japanese occupation of Malaya lasted only about three and a half years, the changes brought about in language policy during that period had little effect on the country's linguistic situation as a whole. The teaching of English or Malay was not increased because the Japanese regarded their own language as the most important subject in schools.

(iii) The Post-War Period (1945 - 1956)

After the Japanese occupation, political and social changes in the country helped to speed up the process of achieving self-government. It was generally felt that independence could only be achieved by means of a certain degree of unity among its various ethnic groups which, in turn, could be achieved only through a common educational policy aiming at fostering a common culture as well as a common language. The new element in the search for a culturally and linguistically unifying education system was nationalism. It was not only proclaimed that the official languages of the Federal Legislative Council should be English and Malay, but also that an adequate knowledge of either English or Malay was to be an essential requirement for the status of a Federal citizen. In 1949, a motion was put forward in the Federal Legislative Council, demanding that besides the teaching of English, the teaching of Malay should also be compulsory in all government and government-aided schools. Two types of national schools were established: Malay-medium schools with English as a compulsory subject throughout the whole school curriculum, and English-medium schools with Malay as a compulsory subject from the beginning of the third year (Standard Three). In private or government-aided Chinese and Tamil-medium schools, English was taught as a second language.

At the tertiary level, the University of Malaya was established in Singapore in 1949 to cater for the increasing demand for higher education in the country. The medium of instruction was English.

(iv) The Period of Independence (1957 - 1969)

With the independence of the country in 1957, there came a yearning to forge the three major ethnic groups into a single united community. To realise such an aim, it was felt that a common language accepted by the three major races had to be widely spoken and used in the country. An education committee, the Razak Committee, was set up in 1956 to study the then existing education system. This committee proposed a new national education policy with the view to ultimately making Malay the national language and the medium of instruction in all schools. The policy was, however, one of moderation as indicated in the Razak Report which stated the aim of creating

A National System of Education acceptable to the people of Federation as a whole which will satisfy their needs and promote their culture, social, economic and political development as a nation, having regards to the intention to make Malay the National Language of the country, while preserving and sustaining the growth of the language and culture of the communities living in the country. This is an essential move towards the ultimate objective of making Malay the medium of instruction in all schools.

(Malaysia : 1956)

The Razak Committee, however, made no firm recommendations to alter the then establishment of schools using the four different languages at both the primary and secondary levels, with the exception that both English and Malay became compulsory subjects in all primary and secondary schools. Hence, the main objective of the Committee was to develop an education system which is 'linguistically plural in form, national in content, Malay in symbolism and developmental in purpose'. A review of the implementation of the new national education policy was made in 1960 by a Review Committee. The main recommendations of this Review Committee were incorporated into the Education Act of 1961, and the existing education system is the result of the implementation of this Act. The main recommendations were : free primary education, automatic promotion from Standard One (Grade One) to Form Three (Grade Nine); development of a common syllabus for use throughout all primary schools, regardless of language media so as to ensure a common outlook and a common loyalty to the country; a basis for a common examination system by creating national (Malay-medium) and national - type schools (other language media) which were eligible to receive government grants provided they followed government syllabuses.

With regard to tertiary education, the University of Malaya opened a branch campus in Kuala Lumpur in 1957 and became a separate university in 1962. English was used as a language of administration, the medium of instruction and the lingua franca on the University campus. It was the government's policy to make the University a bilingual university. Efforts were made to introduce more instruction in Malay so that the University could become more national in scope and bilingual in form.

However, every attempt was made to ensure that this change would not result in the lowering of standards of instruction either in Malay or in English.

Moreover, during the first decade after independence, the government pursued a policy of gradualism in implementing the language policy:

The Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literary Agency) was established in 1959 to develop the Malay language, to standardize pronunciation, to translate scientific and technical books into Malay and to develop Malaysian textbooks for use in schools and colleges. In addition, the Maktub Bahasa (Language College) was set up to train teachers in the Malay language.

In 1969, Bahasa Malaysia, previously known as Bahasa Melayu (the Malay Language), was declared to be the national language and the official language of the government.

It was quite evident that in the 1960's, the government had no intention of reducing the importance of English in the country: English was still used in legal proceedings, trade, training schemes carried out by foreign experts, work in the Internal Revenue Department related with assessment, accounting, collection and investigation on tax matters etc.

1.3.2. Language Policy in Malaysia - The Present

Educational Changes since 1970

The most significant development in the field of education since 1970 has been the progress made towards the establishment of a national education system in which Bahasa Malaysia is the main medium of instruction.

Since 1970, all the government English-medium primary schools have used Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction in standard one and since 1980, all classes up to Form V have been in Bahasa Malaysia medium. However, in line with the Education Act of 1961, the government and government-aided Chinese and Tamil-medium primary schools have continued to exist. At the secondary level, Bahasa Malaysia has been the main medium of instruction in all schools, irrespective of the medium of schools.

With regard to curriculum development, the Curriculum Development centre,

established in 1973, has been responsible for the systematic planning and development of the curricula at primary and secondary levels. The Centre has improved the syllabuses and produced supplementary materials for teachers and pupils in some subjects, in particular, the teaching and learning of Bahasa Malaysia, English, science and mathematics.

Besides, in accordance with the new language policy, government examinations such as the Higher School Certificate and the School Certificate which had been set in Britain in English were phased out and have been set locally in Bahasa Malaysia. Thus, the Lower Certificate of Education (LCE) to be taken at the end of Form III has been replaced by the Sijil Rendah Pelajaran (SRP), the Malaysian Certificate of Education (MCE), at the end of Form V has been replaced by the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM), and the Higher School Certificate (HSC), at the end of Form VI has been replaced by the Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan (STP). A credit in the Bahasa Malaysia paper in SPM is necessary to be awarded the certificate and is a prerequisite for entry to university and government service.

To cope with the increasing number of secondary school leavers, five more universities were established, viz Universiti Sains Malaysia in 1969, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in 1970, Universiti Pertanian Malaysia in 1972, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in 1974 and Universiti Utara Malaysia in 1983.

Apart from Universiti Malaya (University of Malaya) and Universiti Sains Malaysia which originally used English as a medium of instruction, all the other universities have been using Bahasa Malaysia as the main medium of instruction since they were established. The main aim of tertiary education has been to produce manpower in science and technology.

The use of Bahasa Malaysia as the main medium of instruction in institutions at all levels has proved a tremendous success in recent years. The teaching and learning of Bahasa Malaysia, especially in Chinese and Tamil-medium schools, have been further improved through the provision of trained teachers. Thus, the standard of Bahasa Malaysia, especially among the non-Malay students has risen considerably.

However, the success in raising the standard of Bahasa Malaysia has led to the failure in maintaining the standard of English.

Since English still plays a leading role in science, technology,

regional and international trade and higher education in the country, there is a growing concern over the deteriorating standard of English, not only among school teachers and university lecturers but also in the top levels of the government. The former Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Musa Hitam, told Asiaweek (5) that he was worried about the decline of the standard of English and insisted that the government wanted to keep English, the international language, as a tool to assist development:

What we aim for is for the general population to have a knowledge of English, to use English only as a means to an end. (Asiaweek: 1982:30).

The education authorities have also recognised the problem and thus measures aimed at improving the teaching of English as a second language have been given much emphasis. To achieve this aim, steps have been taken to ensure that more teachers are trained in the teaching of the English language. Universiti Malaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and some Teachers' Training Colleges offer degree or diploma courses in related areas in this field. Moreover, resource centres are set up at the state level to ensure that schools are well-equipped with teaching materials. In-service courses for English language teachers are also continued so as to provide teachers with the latest teaching techniques and methods.

As was stated earlier on, programmes for higher education are geared to increase trained and skilled manpower at the diploma and degree levels to meet national manpower demand. More practical training is also emphasised in the science, engineering and technical courses. Intake into the science courses at the diploma and degree levels has increased to achieve the target output of 60% science and 40% arts graduates. The intake into courses at the diploma level has, likewise, increased to meet the manpower demand at the sub-professional level. The enrolment in tertiary education in 1970 and 1980 is as follows:

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>
Certificate Courses	369	11,940
Diploma Courses	3,318	25,697
Degree Courses	7,677	40,279
Total	11,364	77,916 (4)

1.3.3 Language Policy in Malaysia: The Forseeable Future

It is believed that the Chinese and Tamil-medium primary schools, which use Mandarin and Tamil as the main medium of instruction, will continue to exist and that the framework of the existing education system and language policy will still shape the national education system in the foreseeable future.

Though textbooks and reference books are already available in Bahasa Malaysia at primary and secondary school levels, there is still an acute shortage of textbooks and reference books in Bahasa Malaysia at the tertiary level, in particular, books on science and technology. Translation work has been slow due to lack of competent translators and editors. To some extent, this has hampered the progress in fully implementing Bahasa Malaysia as the main medium of instruction at the tertiary level. Moreover, terminology in science and technology is still in the process of being coined and standardised by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka and institutions of higher learning. Hence, for obvious reasons, it is the policy of the Malaysian universities to train students to be bilingual, i.e. to be competent in Bahasa Malaysia in order to follow lectures conducted in Bahasa Malaysia and, at the same time, to be competent in English in order to gain access to texts and reference materials in English.

It is also hoped that university students, who are equipped with basic proficiency in English, will further improve their command of English through reading, interacting with English-speaking friends and using facilities in the mass media, so that they will not be deprived of the opportunity to further their studies in English-speaking countries.

To sum up, in the foreseeable future, the government will further consolidate the role of Bahasa Malaysia in the country and in the meantime, the importance of English will not be overlooked. As was stated in the Fourth Malaysia Plan, although the government policy is to make Bahasa Malaysia the main medium of instruction in all institutions at all levels, 'the use of English as a second language will be given greater emphasis'. (Malaysia, 1984:343)

There exists a wide gap between the standard of Bahasa Malaysia and of English. Though it is uncertain what kind of effective measures can be taken to bridge the gap, English will definitely not lose its role as a second language. Neither will its role in helping to shape the economy and, thus, the development of the country be disregarded.

1.4 The Role of Spoken English in Malaysia Today

For historical reasons, spoken English has been used as a binding-force in the multiracial, multilingual country now known as Malaysia. Although the use of Bahasa Malaysia has been greatly increased since independence in 1957, spoken English still features significantly in the functioning of the nation, in particular, in the mass media, regional and international trade, commerce and business, in the private sector and in higher education.

1.4.1 The Role of Spoken English in the Mass Media

Malaysian media systems are a mixture of government and private enterprise systems: Radio and television are government-operated whereas wired broadcasting, commercial cinemas and most of the press are part of a free-enterprise system.

Broadcasting within Malaysia is almost entirely in the government domain. Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM), alternatively known as the Department of Broadcasting, is a department within the Ministry of Information. These media are operated in line with specified objectives stipulated in government policy. For instance, in 1973, Television Malaysia planned to reduce and eventually stop screening 'long and valueless' feature films as they claimed that television must reflect and enlarge the awareness of the aspiration and development of the nation in terms of unity, democracy, a just society etc. Hence, the objectives of the RTM programmes are, in order of priorities, (i) to inform, (ii) to educate and (iii) to entertain.

Multilingual characteristics are reflected in the Radio programmes: Radio Malaysia consists of four domestic radio networks differentiated by languages, viz the National Network is broadcast in Bahasa Malaysia, the Blue Network in English, the Green Network in Chinese and the Red Network in Tamil. Apart from the National Network which has one additional broadcasting hour, all the other three networks are on the air about eighteen hours daily. All continuity announcements, musical 'request' programmes, some newscasts and information items in the Blue, Green and Red Networks are in Bahasa Malaysia. Other programmes including music, drama, education programmes and some newscasts are in the respective languages.

Besides, there are two foreign owned radio stations: (i) Rediffusion, owned by Rediffusion International of London, which broadcasts the

Gold and Silver Networks and follows government guidelines. For instance, the only news Rediffusion is permitted to broadcast is that of Radio Malaysia. It is available to about 20% of the population in the large towns in West Malaysia. The two networks operate from 6am to mid-night and cater mainly for the Chinese : about 70% of the programmes are in Chinese, 21% in English and 9% in Bahasa Malaysia. (ii) The Royal Australian Air Force Base at Butterworth has an internal radio station which can be received in Penang and Province Wellesley. Apart from news, which is broadcast direct from RTM, all other programmes are in English.

Television Malaysia operates the commercial networks: Most of the programmes on Network One, including all the newscasts, continuity announcements, commercial advertisements, locally produced programmes, are in Bahasa Malaysia and those which are not in Bahasa Malaysia are in English, which carry Bahasa Malaysia subtitles. Network One telecasts about 67 hours a week. About 70% of the programmes are in Bahasa Malaysia. The percentage of English programmes, including feature films, television series, documentaries and cartoons, is still fairly high ie about 30%. (Source: The Star, 17th March 1985).

Network Two transmits programmes in Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese (News in Mandarin, feature films or television series in Mandarin or Cantonese), Indian (News in Tamil, feature films in Tamil or Hindi) and English. Any of these languages may be used in commercial advertisements, but all continuity announcements are in Bahasa Malaysia. Network Two telecasts about 50 hours a week: approximately 41% are in Bahasa Malaysia, 10% in Chinese, 9% in Indian languages, and English programmes, including feature films, television series, documentaries, still take up about 40% of the screening time. Though foreign produced programmes are gradually being replaced with local shows, English programmes are unlikely to show a sharp decrease in the foreseeable future.

An independent television network, known as TV3, was established in the beginning of 1984. It telecasts about 47 hours a week: 68% of the programmes are in English, 17% in Bahasa Malaysia and 15% in Chinese. (Source: The New Straits Times, 24 to 30 June 1985). It has become the most popular network in the country. For the time being, the Network only serves an audience along the West Coast, and it is expected to telecast nationwide by the end of 1987.

Within the free-enterprise system, commercial cinemas have been 'free' in the sense of being free to operate as a medium of entertainment without a specific requirement to abide by national goals. However, all films to be screened are reviewed by the Malaysian Film Censorship Board with a view to cutting or banning content which is considered excessively violent, offensive to public morals or racially inflammatory.

About 95% of the feature films shown in the country are imported. The English language films, all with Bahasa Malaysia and Chinese subtitles, are imported from America, England etc. The Chinese feature films (Mandarin and Cantonese), all with Bahasa Malaysia, English and Chinese subtitles, are imported from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The Indian feature films (Tamil and Hindi), with Bahasa Malaysia subtitles, are imported from India. There are also Indonesian films imported from Indonesia.

Unlike some countries in Asia, for example, Thailand and Japan, where most of the Western feature films and television series are dubbed in the local languages, Malaysia still keeps the English sound track of the films. In order to follow the stories of the films with ease, one has to acquire a good command of spoken English and only has to resort to the Bahasa Malaysia or Chinese subtitles when one fails to understand the English language. Hence, English can be heard over the radio, on television, in cinemas everyday and every where in the country. (6) (Source of information on the media: from Grenfell, 1979).

1.4.2 The Role of Spoken English in Trade, Commerce and Business

(i) In Tourism

According to government statistics (Malaysia, 1981:307), tourist arrivals in West Malaysia increased at 14.4% per annum from 528,000 in 1970 to 2,031,835 in 1980 and it is expected that by 1985, the increase will reach the region of 2,823,000. Thus, programmes for promoting the development of the tourist industry are being expanded. Apart from tourists from Japan, Hong Kong and Thailand, when the languages of these countries are used to some extent, English is the main lingua franca for tourists from other countries, at the airports, hotels and all holiday resorts in the country.

(ii) In International and Regional Trade and Business

Malaysia has expanded its international and regional trade since 1971. The Malaysian Trade Commission's service has been further expanded with the opening of trade offices in countries such as Italy and West Germany. The Trade Commission has been playing an important role in increasing Malaysia's exports and in boosting the flow of industrial investment into the country. English is, again, the main language used in trade transactions, negotiations, conferences etc at the international level. Apart from trade with Indonesia where Bahasa Malaysia is used, English is also the main language in business dealings with countries in the region, for instance, the Phillipines, Thailand and Singapore.

(iii) In Foreign Industries

Foreign investment in the country has been greatly increased since the early 1970's after the establishment of the Federal Industrial Development Authority, a statutory organization responsible for industrial promotion and industrial development. All joint ventures between local companies and foreign counterparts are subject to certain agreements between the two parties. For instance, agreements relating to the joint venture partnership, transfer of technical know-how, the supply of technical services and consultancy, the use of patents and overseas market networks etc. All these agreements are made in English and spoken English plays a key role in the transfer of technical know-how in consultation and public relations.

(iv) In the Private Sector

The private sector has been playing a vital role in meeting the development objectives of the nation. It has provided a major source of investment, technological progress and skills and has contributed considerably to output and employment in the plantation, mining, manufacturing, construction and services sections, either on its own or in joint ventures with the public sector. English is still used extensively in the private sector, as was pointed out in Asiaweek (1982:29). 'Most people would rather use English for business'. (Source of information in S.1.4.2: Fourth Malaysia Plan, 1984).

1.4.3. The Role of Spoken English in Government Services

English has almost been completely replaced by Bahasa Malaysia in government administration since the late 1970's. In recent

years, efforts have been made to use Bahasa Malaysia in court hearings. Yet, English is still being used in court to some extent. The only government service which still uses English as the main language is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where diplomatic affairs with foreign countries are dealt with in English.

1.4.4. The Role of Spoken English in Higher Education

The importance of English in higher education has been discussed in Sections 1.3.2. and 1.3.3.

Spoken English is playing an increasingly important role in the institutions of higher learning today. The reasons are: (i) Many Malaysian students, private as well as sponsored by the government, are pursuing their studies in English-speaking countries overseas. In 1980, the number of Malaysian students overseas were estimated to be 39,908. (Malaysia, 1981: 350). A good command of spoken English is necessary to understand lectures in English, to communicate with lecturer and fellow students, to participate in discussions, seminars and conferences. (ii) University graduates working in the private sector need a reasonably good command of spoken English to communicate with their clients, to promote sales, to attend conferences etc. In view of this, spoken English has become an important component in the English language courses in most universities in Malaysia.

To sum up, judging from the role of spoken English in present-day Malaysian society, it is evident that English has been used less and less intranationally but more and more internationally.

Malaysian students still have easy access to opportunities to improve their listening skills through the mass media. For instance, the radio and television programmes provide them with ample opportunity to listen to British, American and Malaysian English. However, they hardly have any opportunity to speak English. This has resulted in the deterioration in their speaking skills. The growing demand for the use of English at the international level has produced an urgent need for remedying this situation.

1.5. Varieties of Malaysian English : An Overview

Malaysian English (ME) has been discussed in some detail by researchers such as Tongue (1974), Platt and Weber (1980), Wong (1981, 1982) and Augustin (1982). For the purposes of this study, it would be beneficial to review some of the salient features of the varieties of ME discussed by these researchers.

Basically, there are two main varieties of ME though different researchers use different terminology to describe them. Tongue (1974:19-20), for instance, categorises the English of Singapore and Malaysia (ESM) as 'standard' and 'substandard' varieties, though he admits that 'the line between ESM and substandard form is extremely difficult to draw as there would be considerable disagreement as to whether certain forms are sufficiently widely-used by educated persons to qualify as (standard) ESM'.

For him ESM possesses a 'stylistic' range, viz the formal style which represent 'standard' ESM which may be very close to British standard and the informal style which contains a very large number of elements and expressions belonging to very 'probably substandard category and even definitely substandard items'. Moreover, he claims that these formal and informal styles are so different that they can be considered two dialects:

Anyone who has been only a short time in these countries (ie. Singapore and Malaysia) will have had the remarkable experience of listening to a speaker who has been conversing in near-native discourse suddenly switch to very informal ESM when he speaks to someone familiar only with the substandard form, or chats on the telephone with an intimate friend. This is a dramatic incident - everything seems to change, including grammar, vocabulary, voice quality, pace of utterance, and even gestures. (1974:20).

Wong (1981) sees hierarchical ranking in ME: at the top of the scale, there are those who look upon English as their primary language and who use it with near-native speaker proficiency and down the scale, there are those who are not very fluent in the language and those who can only cope with basic communicative purposes. She uses Quirk's (1968) terms 'local dialect' and 'wider speech-form' in describing the two varieties of ME. For her, the 'local dialect' is meant to be used mainly 'in speech and limited to conversation in everyday matters only with familiars who are also Malaysians, who can then be expected to share the same dialect'. The 'wider speech-form', on the other hand, is used with non-Malaysians 'on all occasions, even in speech and informal situations', and 'The wider speech-form is normally used with Malaysian on a more formal level, whether in speech or in writing, and is usually

learnt through formal instruction whereas the local dialect is picked up informally. The wider speech form, thus, has a much wider sphere of use than the local dialect'. (1981:96).

Both Tongue and Wong claim that most English-speaking Malaysians are in command of both the varieties of ME.

Platt and Weber (1980) distinguish the two varieties of ME which they term 'MEI' and 'MEII', according to the schools the speakers attended. 'MEI' refers to the English of the English-medium educated where English is still a true second language, being used by its speakers in everyday conversation. 'MEII' refers to the English of the Malay-medium (and I think, the Chinese-medium too) educated where English 'has a definite foreign/second language appearances' (P.182) and, for some of its speakers, it appears to be a foreign language, rarely used in oral communication and even less in writing or reading.

As was mentioned in Section 1.3, because of the change in language policy in general and educational policies in particular, standard ME (or MEI) is on the decline and eventually 'sub-standard' ME (or MEII) will take over. Wong (1981:95) realises this change:

English is passing through a transitional stage in the country at the moment: there is still a relatively large section of the adult population who feel most at home in English, while younger ones are coming up for whom English will be but an auxiliary language..... This changing situation has inevitably affected English as it is used in Malaysia at the moment, and will undoubtedly affect it even more in the future as the percentage of near-native speakers of English dwindles to the point where they will cease to have any influence at all on the use of the language in the country. It will only be in the future, therefore, that the truly distinctive characteristics of English in Malaysia will become more visible.

Although it is difficult to draw a line between the two main varieties of ME, the following salient features can, however, represent the majority of the speakers of the two main varieties:

1.5.1 Standard ME/the Wider Speech-form/MEI

With the exception of a minority of Malaysian speakers who have been educated abroad and have achieved near-native speaker proficiency, generally speaking, the variety of ME under these headings (Let us call it the First Variety of ME), refers to the English of the

average educated Malaysian, which consists of standard English spoken with an identifiable local accent, with a small admixture of local expressions and lexis, and compared with standard British English, exhibits only trivial differences in syntax and lexis. At the lexical level, this First Variety of ME differs from that of standard British English mainly in the use of some words derived from the multilingual nature of the country: There are loans from contact languages such as Arabic (eg 'syce' meaning 'driver'), Chinese (eg 'towkay' meaning 'proprietor'), Bahasa Malaysia (eg 'jaga' meaning 'guard'). In fact, many Bahasa Malaysia words have been officially brought into ME. (eg 'dadah' meaning 'drugs', 'orang asli' referring to the aboriginal peoples of Malaysia, 'ringgit' being equivalent to 'dollar').

Besides, there are words reflecting the colonial background of Malaysians, notably, the term 'shillings' is frequently used to refer to coins. There are also words which have originated from English but are used in 'un-English' ways e.g. 'Heaty' and 'cooling' food or drinks make the body hot or cool, respectively. Chilli and coffee, for instance, are regarded as 'heaty' stuff and beer and certain fruits like water-melon, are regarded as 'cooling' stuff, reflecting concepts of some Asian cultures. The term 'auntie' and 'uncle' are used not only to express family relationships but also as marks of respect and in addressing elderly people.

At the syntactic level, there are in fact no significant or consistent differences between the grammatical features of this variety and those of standard British English. Yet, some differences can still be detected in some speakers of this variety :

(i) Some speakers of this variety have problems with the complex tense system of English, including :

(a) The difficulties in selection of correct tense in different situations and contexts e.g. the use of present continuous for simple present :

I'm running [for 'I run'] a restaurant in Penang. (Statement of fact).

(b) The difficulty of finding the correct forms with which to express the tense e.g.

Many victims have been taking [for 'taken'] to hospitals.

(c) The difficulty with 'dummy' auxiliary 'do', 'does', 'did' e.g.
Why she wants [for 'does she want'] to do that ?

- (ii) Some speakers of this variety have problems with
 - (a) The use of prepositions eg 'discuss about', 'comprise of' etc.
 - (b) Prepositions used in idiomatic phrases eg 'cope up with'.
- (iii) Some speakers of this variety often regularise uncountable nouns as countable nouns eg 'informations', 'equipments', 'luggages', and expressions, such as 'an advice', 'an evidence' are common.

At the phonological level, the most striking feature which differs from standard British English (RP) is word stress:

- (i) Many speakers of this variety have stress shifted at times irregularly to various syllables in a word and the overall pattern is the tendency to stress the penultimate or last syllable eg colleague, development, competent, discount (both verb and noun).
- (ii) In RP, the primary stress of many words depends on the parts of speech, eg 'photograph, photographer, photographic, photography. ME speakers do not make these distinctions and pronounce all the four words with primary stress on the same syllable ie photograph, photographer, photographic, photography.

As far as pronunciation is concerned, the following deviations are most significant:

- (i) Malaysian speakers tend to shorten long vowels especially in closed syllables and monophthongize diphthongs eg 'caught' and 'feet' are pronounced as [kʌt] and [fɪt] respectively, and the pronunciation of 'caught' and 'cot', 'feet' and 'fit' are hardly distinguishable. 'Day' and 'road' are pronounced as [de] and [rɒd] respectively.
- (ii) In RP, in words such as 'banana', 'consider', 'upon' and 'attack' where the stress is on the second syllable, the vowel in the first syllable is reduced to a schwa. In ME, the vowel in such syllables has its full vowel qualities ie [a], [ɒ], [ʌ], [æ].
- (iii) In RP, the stops and affricates /p, t, k, b, d, g, tʃ, dʒ/ are often partially released when they occur in the final position of a word.

In ME, they are not released at all eg lip [lɪp], lit [lɪt], lick [lɪk] where /p/, /t/ and /k/ are totally unreleased.

- (iv) ME speakers tend to replace voiced stops, affricates and fricatives with their voiceless counterparts in word-final positions. eg 'leave', 'manage', 'ones', are pronounced as [lɪf], [m net], [wʌns] respectively. Conversely, where voiceless fricatives are used in RP, their voiced counterparts are used in ME especially in intervocalic

positions eg 'December' and 'conversation' are pronounced as [dizembə], [kɒnvəʒəʃən] respectively.

1.5.2. 'Sub-standard ME'/the Local Dialect/ME II

I shall call the variety of ME under these headings, the Second Variety of ME, which is a more simplified variety of English than the First Variety. It has all the features of the First Variety. Besides, at the lexical level, limited lexis is used and consequently, a number of words serve a variety of functions, giving extended meanings not normally accepted in standard British English, eg the words 'open' and 'close' are used in these contexts: to 'open' and 'close' lights, taps, radios, televisions and also to 'open' shirts, meaning to unbutton them. The word 'cut' is used in these contexts: 'I cut his car', meaning 'to overtake'; 'He cut me by ten marks', meaning 'to beat'; 'The shopkeeper cut me two dollars', meaning 'to deduct'. The word 'find' is used in these contexts: 'I'm going to find my friend tonight', meaning 'to pay him/her a visit'; 'I must find the dictionary', meaning 'to look up meanings'.

Moreover, there is confusion between words such as 'bring', 'take', 'fetch' and 'send'; 'say', 'speak', and 'talk'; 'come' and 'go' etc. The speakers of this variety, too, usually use words that are normally classified as slang or colloquialism eg 'shake legs' (from a literal translation of Bahasa Malaysia expression 'goyang kaki', literally 'to shake legs' and meaning 'completely at leisure').

At the syntactic level, this variety is a more simplified and reduced version of the First Variety and differs from standard British English in the following:

(i) Omission of the copula, eg

The flower (is) very beautiful.	(in pre-adjective position)
My sister (is) in K.L.	(in pre-locative position)
My brother (is) working in a bank.	(in pre-V-ing position)
My uncle (is) a lawyer.	(in pre-predicate nominal position)

(ii) Omission of 'dummy' subject 'it', eg

Look! (It's) Raining!

(iii) Omission of object, eg

They will send (it) to you.

(iv) Wrong subject-verb agreement (concord) eg

He don't [for 'doesn't'] have a car.

(v) Wrong inflection of the various parts of speech. eg

I haven't think [for 'thought'] of it.

Let's study the acting [for 'action'] of the heart.

(vi) Confusion of the complex tense system

Sometimes, 'tense' and 'verb forms' are left to be communicated either by context alone or through the use of adverb or adverbial phrase of 'time'. eg yesterday, last night, as in:

He buy [for 'bought'] a pen yesterday.

He already done [for 'has done'] his homework.

We seen [for 'saw'] Dallas' last night.

(vii) Lack of plural marking in nouns. eg

He bought two book ['for books']

One of the book [for 'books'] was stolen.

(viii) The use of common question tags 'isn't it' and 'is it'

for all types of structure, regardless of the subject and verb used in the main sentence, eg

You didn't want it, isn't it? [for 'did you?']

He is leaving tomorrow, isn't it? [for 'isn't he?']

There is ~~no~~body there, is it? [for 'is there?']

(ix) The use of 'or not' in yes-no-questions. eg

Open the door for me. Can or not? [for 'Can you open the door for me?']

Going or not? [for 'Are you going?']

Swimming yesterday or not? [for 'Did you go swimming yesterday?']

(x) Replacement of possessive pronouns, 'mine', 'yours', 'his', etc with 'my one', 'your one', 'his one', respectively. eg

This is not my one [for 'mine'].

Your one [for 'yours'] is more expensive.

(xi) Wrong word order in indirect questions, eg

Can you tell me where is the post-office ? [for 'where the post-office is ?'].

I want to know what are these samples for. [for 'what these samples are for.']

(xii) Misuse of articles

(a) A definite or indefinite article does not always occur in ME in positions where it is obligatory in standard British English.e.g.

I went to (the) library in town.

This is (the) first step you should take.

There is (a) swimming pool inside.

(b) Redundancy of articles e.g.

They are going to build the [for ϕ] factories over there.

A [for ϕ] man must change in a changing world. ('man' = the human race).

(c) Wrong selection of articles e.g.

He bought a [for 'an'] umbrella.

(xiii) The word 'got' is used to mean 'have' and 'there are' e.g.

Got [for 'there are'] many people there.

He got [for 'has'] enough money.

(xiv) The use of 'fillers', la or lah, ah, ha, what, one, man etc. e.g.

Come again la.

What you want ah ?

I didn't do it what.

It's no joke man.

They come together one.

What is it you want ha ?

At the phonological level, the Second Variety of ME differs from RP in all the features mentioned in the First Variety. Besides, the following features are also marked. (Some of these features, especially (i) and (ii) are also present in many speakers of the First Variety.)

(i) In RP, the voiceless stops /p, t, k /are aspirated when they are in initial position, but unaspirated or weakly aspirated in unstressed syllables. In this variety of ME, these voiceless stops are weakly aspirated or unaspirated in all word positions.

(ii) Very often, one or more consonant clusters in this variety of ME are omitted in final positions.e.g. 'just', 'guests' are pronounced as [dʒʌs] and [ges] respectively. Medial consonant clusters are also reduced, especially if a /d/ or /l/ is in the cluster e.g. 'hundred', 'also', 'child' are pronounced as [hʌnrəd], [ɒsə], [tʃaɪd] respectively. Sometimes, a vowel is inserted into the consonant clusters, thus, breaking them up into two syllables, e.g. 'film', 'little' are pronounced as [fɪləm], [lɪtəl] respectively.

(iii) /θ/ and /ð/ are often replaced with /t/ and /d./e.g. 'think' and 'then' are pronounced as [tɪŋ] and [den] respectively.

(iv) /v./is often replaced with /w./e.g. 'van' and 'even' are pronounced as [wɛn] and [iwen] respectively.

(For further details on ME, see Chapters Four and Five).

1.5.3. ME and International Intelligibility

Hardly any research has been done on the intelligibility of ME for native-speakers of English. Wong (1981 : 94), however, makes this statement :

Malaysian English has begun to come into its own as yet another dialect of English, different from any other recognised dialect of English, peculiar to its own region, and yet intelligible on the whole to English speakers everywhere.

Tongue (1974 : 21) shares similar views:

Certainly educated ESM is universally and immediately comprehensible to any native - speaker of English and may perhaps most appropriately be regarded as a significant addition to the rich catalogue of English dialects.

Augustin (1982 : 254) also claims that NBSE (Near-native British Standard English) is 'easily comprehensible by native speakers of English of any variety' and EME (English educated ME) too 'is readily comprehensible to native speakers of English of any variety.'

Wong, Tongue and Augustin's observation on the international intelligibility of ME may be true for the First Variety of ME. However, as the First Variety gradually disappears, it is the intelligibility of the Second Variety of ME that raises Malaysian educators' concern and one of the main aims of this study is to investigate to what extent the Second Variety is intelligible to native speakers of English. The data (Chapter Three) of this study exhibit the features of both Varieties, with predominantly those of the Second Variety.

1.6. Choosing a Model/Models of English for Teaching Purposes in Malaysia : The Problems

1.6.1 The Concept of 'Model'

For Kachru (1982 : 31), the concept of 'model' should be interpreted in terms of 'theory construction' e.g. a 'model' for linguistic description and its use in pedagogical literature which entails two senses, viz. the sense of 'acceptability', generally by the native speakers of a language and the sense of 'fulfilling codified prerequisites' according to a given 'standard' or 'norm' at various linguistic levels. In this sense, a 'model' provides a 'proficiency scale' which may be used to 'ascertain if a learner has attained proficiency according to a given norm.'

As far as English is concerned, the concept of a 'model' usually refers to the two dialects of English viz. Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) which usually serve as 'models' for non-native speakers of English. RP, as a 'model', is closely related to the English public schools and since RP plays an important role in the British Broadcasting Corporation, it is sometimes termed 'BBC English'. However, not all linguists are in favour of adopting RP as a 'model' of English (see also Chapter Four, S.4.2.(i)) Abercrombie (1951 : 15), for instance, argues that the concept of a standard pronunciation such as RP is 'a bad rather than a good thing' as it provides an 'accent-bar' which does not 'reflect social

reality' of England, and although 'those who talk RP can justly consider themselves educated, they are outnumbered these days by the undoubtedly educated people who do not talk RP.'

The term 'General American' refers to the variety of English spoken in the central and western United States and in most parts of Canada. Despite the work done by Kenyon (1924: 5), he recommends pronunciation tolerance towards various American varieties of English: 'Probably no intelligent person actually expects cultivated people in the South, the East and the West to pronounce alike' and one should learn 'not only to refrain from criticising pronunciations that differ from his own, but to expect them and listen for them with respectful, intelligent interest.'

Strevens (1980: 69), however, argues that 'standard English' is not necessarily British English, but it should possess these characteristics:

- (i) It is spoken with pretty well any accent and has no obligatory "paired" accent of its own;
- (ii) it is encountered with only trivial variation throughout the English-speaking world (we are referring here to grammar and lexis..... not to pronunciation);
- (iii) it is almost universally accepted by native speakers of English as a suitable model of English for teaching their own young and for teaching foreign learners.

In other words, any variety of English which is a near native educated speaker variety may be termed standard English.

1.6.2. Nonnative Varieties of English and the Question of Recognition and Acceptability

Until relatively recently, studies of English focused almost entirely on native-speaker English and nonnative varieties had traditionally not been accepted or recognised and had been considered 'deficient' models of English or 'second-class' English. It has, sometimes, been analyzed in terms of 'common errors' ie institutionalised inventories of deviations from a presumed norm.

Prator (1968 : 466), for instance, argues that nonnative Englishes must inevitably be inferior to native-speaker English and the acceptance of a nonnative variety as pedagogical target will inevitably lead to progressive deterioration and loss of intelligibility:

There is ample evidence that a great deal of variation at the phonetic level, even when all phonemic distinctions are preserved, can reduce intelligibility to a point at which no reliable communication takes place.

On the other hand, more and more researchers have assumed a completely different attitude toward nonnative varieties of English, taking the conditions and needs of the respective countries into consideration. Kachru (1976 : 223), for instance, refutes Prator's viewpoint and classifies his attitudes into 'seven attitudinal sins', viz. (i) the sin of ethnocentrism, (ii) the sin of wrong perception about the language attitudes on the two sides of the Atlantic, (iii) the sin of not recognizing the nonnative varieties of English as culture - bound codes of communication, (iv) the sin of ignoring the 'systemicness' (sic) of the nonnative varieties of English, (v) the sin of ignoring linguistic interference and language dynamics, (vi) the sin of overlooking the 'cline of Englishness' in language intelligibility, (vii) the sin of exhibiting language colonialism.

Kachru (1976 : 234) argues that nonnative varieties of English such as the major Third World varieties should gain recognition and acceptance by native speakers as there is 'a need to see the function of these varieties with reference to the country in which English is used, its roles in the sociocultural network and the dependency of the local variety on the native variety with special reference to interaction with native speakers.' He supports his stance with reference to Indian English:

We must accept two premises concerning Indian English, as we should about any other Third World variety of English. First, that the users of Indian English form a distinct speech community who use a variety of English which is by and large formally distinct because it performs functions which are different from the other varieties of English. Second, that Indian

English functions in the Indian sociocultural context in order to perform those roles which are relevant and appropriate to the social, educational and administrative network of India. (1976 : 235)

He concludes that since in the Third World countries, the choice of functions, uses and models of English has to be determined on a pragmatic basis, bearing in mind the local conditions and needs, 'it will, therefore, be appropriate that the native speakers of English abandon the attitude of linguistic chauvinism and replace it with an attitude of linguistic tolerance.' (P. 236)

Smith (1981 : 2), too, makes this claim:

English belongs to the world and every nation which uses it does so with different tone, colour and quality. English is an international auxiliary language. It is yours (no matter who you are) as much as it is mine (no matter who I am). We may use it for different purposes and for different lengths of time on different occasions, but nonetheless it belongs to all of us No one needs to become more like Americans, the British, the Australians, the Canadians or any other English speaker in order to lay claim to the language.

Strevens (1980 : 90) argues on the same lines:

The native speaker of English must accept that English is no longer his possession alone: it belongs to the world and new form of English, born of new countries with new communicative needs should be accepted into the marvelously flexible and adaptable galaxy of "Englishes" which constitute the English language.

Brumfit (1977 : 16) also feels that nonnative varieties of near standard English should be accepted to 'the fullest degree':

There are a large number of near standard English speakers whose dialect is adapted to their own local cultural needs and whose pronunciation is totally intelligible to a willing listener, who are manifestly nonnative speakers of English..... Since their deviations from standard English is no greater than that of most speakers, their version of the language is - or should be - acceptable to the fullest degree.

1.6.3. Choosing a Model /Models of English for Teaching Purposes in Malaysia

As was discussed in Section 1.6.2, non-native varieties of English have gradually gained recognition and acceptance from native speakers of English. It, therefore, seems appropriate to use a 'local' model of English for teaching purposes in the Malaysian context. However, the question of whether it is more appropriate to adopt a 'local' model or a native-speaker model as a teaching model is yet to be considered in greater detail.

For historical reasons, standard British English and in the case of the spoken form, RP, had been used as a model in the teaching and learning of English in the country. Since independence, there has been a growing realization that there is no necessity for Malaysians to model their speech on standard British English. This, in fact, has been recognised at the official level, as seen in one of the aims of English language teaching in primary schools:

Malaysians are learning English increasingly as a language of international communication. The aim should therefore continue to be to teach children to speak in such a way that they will be understood not only by fellow Malaysians, but also by speakers of English from other parts of the world..... It should however be noted that our aim of 'international intelligibility' does not imply that our pupils should necessarily speak exactly like Englishmen : there would not be sufficient time to achieve this, nor is it necessary. What is aimed at is that they should be able to speak with acceptable rhythm and stress, and to produce the sounds of English sufficiently well for a listener to be able to distinguish between similar words, e.g. pan - pen.

(Malaysia : 1971)

Wong (1982 : 261) questions the commonly held assumption that native-speaker English should be the automatic choice as the goal for all English - speaking countries, whether the language be native or foreign to the country and suggests two possible alternatives, i.e. 'Nuclear English' (the model proposed by Quirk (1978) to meet the world's need for an international auxiliary language, based on the assumption that the only viable possibility for an international auxiliary language is either to adopt or to adapt an existing natural language e.g. English) and 'utilitarian English' (a term used to refer to the variety of English that is already spoken in many parts of the Third

World, in regions where English has merely an auxiliary and instrumental role to play in non-native speaker contexts). Speaking specifically about Malaysia, Wong feels that 'utilitarian English' is a better alternative:

It is recognised that the aim of communication, never mind correct grammar, syntax or style, will probably lead in the near future to a greatly simplified form of English used by the average Malaysians..... In the national education policy, English is now viewed and treated as a utilitarian language, a tool to be used instead of an object to be admired. (1982 : 271)

Wong, however, overlooks the *question of* whether this 'utilitarian English', marked by simplification and reduction of native-speaker English, evident at the levels of grammar, lexis and pronunciation, can be intelligible internationally. Though English is retained as a second language in the country, its function is mostly auxiliary in nature for purpose of wider communication at the international rather than intranational level. To adopt 'utilitarian English' as a model of English is definitely sufficient to cope with communication at the intranational level. However, the extent of deviation that can exist without impairing mutual intelligibility at the international level is by no means obvious.

Tongue (1974 : 21) queries the feasibility of adopting 'sub-standard' English as a model for learners in Singapore and Malaysia:

Whether the variety of English we are setting up as a model for learners in the two countries is to be standard British or ESM, the sub-standard and pidginized forms are clearly unacceptable and must simply be called wrong.....

forms and expressions of the sub-standard type need to be corrected if the speaker wishes to speak English which is intelligible and respected on an international scale.

Hence, to ensure international intelligibility, the Second Variety of ME should not be used as a model for teaching purposes. Probably, it does not really matter whether a native-speaker variety or the First Variety of ME is taken as a model as it is generally claimed that this variety is internationally intelligible. (S.l.5.3.) However, other factors related to the choice of a model have to be taken into consideration:

(i) Description of the First Variety of ME

In the absence of a sound and comprehensive description of the First Variety of ME at present, the criteria that constitute a genuine variety of English are not well established in sufficient quantity to set up a model. Moreover, the question of whether certain structures or expressions are 'standard' or 'sub-standard' is always subjective and the judgement of degree of 'deviations' from norms is again by no means objective. Hence, unless criteria classifying what the First Variety of ME really is, are established, this model cannot be used for teaching purposes effectively.

(ii) Problems of teaching material and assessment

Since the First Variety of ME has not been thoroughly explored, no teaching materials based specifically on this model in terms of phonology, syntax and lexis have been produced. Thus, besides teaching materials, problems with testing and examining will also arise.

(iii) Purpose of learning English

Since English is used less and less at the intranational level, i.e. for the purpose of daily communication within the country, the primary aim of learning English in the near future will be to take part in international interactions where English is commonly used. Hence, steps should be taken to teach English with the aim of achieving international rather than intranational purposes. A native-speaker model will help to achieve this purpose, as Stevens (1980:98) argues: While the teaching of English should reflect in all cases the socio-cultural contexts and the educational policies of the countries concerned, there is a need to distinguish between 'those countries (eg Japan) whose requirements focus upon international comprehensibility and those countries (eg India) that, in addition, must take account of English as it is used for their own intranational purposes, i.e. for use by large populations within the country'. He suggests that the most suitable pedagogical model for countries such as Japan is usually a native-speaker model and for countries such as India, the local form.

(iv) General opinion about a 'model' of English among Malaysian Students

In a survey to find out Malaysian university students' exposure to spoken English and the aims of learning the spoken language, a set of questionnaire was distributed to 57 students in Universiti Sains Malaysia in March 1985. (For details, see Appendix H) The Survey shows that standard British English (or RP) was still considered the most desirable model though there was also some indication that ME was a suitable model: of the 57 subjects, 26 (or 45.6%) of them would like to follow a spoken English course with standard British English as a model whereas only 17 (or 29.8%) and 14 (or 27.6%) would like to follow a course with ME and American English as models respectively.

(v) Realistic/Unrealistic Model; 'Model' and 'Goal'

It is generally felt that in the teaching of written English, standard English must be used as a model as it is often not easy for a reader to comprehend the written language which is deviant from the norm, and negotiation of meaning is not possible unless it is read in the presence of the writer. On the other hand, such negotiation is usually possible in spoken interaction between the speaker and the listener and, therefore, in teaching spoken English, it is not absolutely necessary to use a native-speaker variety of English as a model.

Those who are in favour of adopting a nonnative variety of English as a model always claim that a native-speaker variety such as RP is not the practical form of English for teaching purposes as the teachers themselves may be incapable of producing it and, therefore, it is not a realistic model. A 'local' model will prove to be more realistic as all teachers can cope with the teaching task efficiently. However, by 'model', I do not refer to the language of the classroom teacher, but to the spoken texts and teaching aids such as tapes in the language laboratory, which are used as examples. To adopt a native-speaker model is not to demand that the teachers are expected to become indistinguishable from the model in their speech. Neither are the learners expected to achieve the performance level of the model. The model will only serve as a guide to the sort of English they should achieve, not only in terms of pronunciation, but also syntax and lexis. Brumfit (1977:16-17) expresses similar views:

It is convenient to distinguish between a model and a goal.

There is clearly a need, if English is being taught for international purposes, for there to be a consistent reference

point for teaching. It probably does not matter very much which dialect is taken as a model, providing it is one which is intelligible internationally However to adopt such a model is not to demand that all speakers in a particular community are expected to become indistinguishable from the model in their speech. There are a large number of near standard English speakers whose dialect is adapted to their own local cultural needs, and whose pronunciation is totally intelligible to a willing listener, who are manifestly non-native speakers of English On the other hand, there are also quite clearly speakers whose English is fluent, satisfactory for communication with those who have learnt it with them and members of their own community, who are almost totally unintelligible to the untrained native listener, or even reader..... the best goal for the non-native speaker is the English of the most educated and articulate speakers of English in his own linguistic group.

1.6.4. A Model of Spoken English at University Level in Malaysia and its Relevance to the Present Study

Generally speaking, those who often require to understand and be understood by English users of another country are almost always those with more education than the average whereas those whose needs for communicating in English are fully met by the local varieties are generally those without much education. It, therefore, seems that the further one proceeds up the educational scale, the more closely one's local form of English needs to conform to the criteria of international intelligibility.

The primary aims of Malaysian university students' learning spoken English are to pursue their studies in English-speaking countries and to work in the private sector where a good command of English is an advantage. (S.1.4.4.) They have for the most part already acquired sufficient command of spoken ME, though the proficiency varies from speaker to speaker, and this enables them to communicate socially within the country. Hence, it is not necessary to use ME as a model for teaching purposes at the tertiary level and a native-speaker model or a near native-speaker model is deemed the most appropriate model at this level. For historical reasons, this model is preferably standard British English or RP. However, it has to be

stressed again that adopting RP as a model does not mean that students should be encouraged to discard speaking ME. In fact, it is not possible for them to do so. ME will still remain the variety of English they use when communicating with Malaysians. Their exposure to RP in the classroom will help them to conform to the required 'standard English' not only in pronunciation, but also in syntax and lexis, which in turn, will benefit them both educationally and professionally after their graduation.

Another main aim of this study is, thus, to explore the features of ME at the phonological, syntactic, lexical and discourse levels that may affect intelligibility for the native speakers of English and hence emphasis will be laid on remedying these features in designing a spoken English course for Malaysian university students.

In this introductory chapter, I have outlined the language policy in Malaysia, the varieties of ME and their relevance to the present study ie to investigate the intelligibility of ME for native speakers of English. In the next chapter, I shall discuss the variables involved in intelligibility, research related to it, and shall set up my own definition of intelligibility.

NOTES

1. This thesis only discusses spoken English in West Malaysia (or Peninsula Malaysia). Situations in East Malaysia (including Sabah and Sarawak) will not be dealt with on the grounds that all data for research purposes (Chapters Three to Eight) are derived from West Malaysia.
2. Instead of Malay, the term Bahasa Malaysia (the Malaysian Language) has been used since 1969. (See also S 1.3.1. iv).
3. The small English-speaking population refers to the Eurasians, ie the children of mixed European and Asian parentage whose first language is English, and also some Europeans.
4. The figures, which were obtained from the Fourth Malaysia Plan, included students at institutions overseas. (Malaysia:1984)
5. The author of the article, entitled 'Stopping the Rot' in Asiaweek, October 15, 1982 is anonymous.
6. Other media such as newspaper and advertisements are specifically excluded as written English does not relate to the present study directly.

CHAPTER TWO

ON INTELLIGIBILITY

Though the concept of 'intelligibility' has been discussed in linguistic and pedagogical literature since the late 1940's, very little thorough research has been done on this area. The difficulty and complexity of researching 'intelligibility' probably lie in the variables involved in it. Thus, it would be better to use the term in a more specific sense and set up some criteria for defining 'intelligibility', in particular, whether the term is used to refer to native or non-native varieties of a language. In this chapter, the background literature on 'intelligibility' will be reviewed in the light of the following : the definition of intelligibility, the parameters and degrees of intelligibility, factors influencing intelligibility and previous research related to intelligibility. The chapter ends with a discussion of the concept of 'intelligibility' used in the present study.

2.1 The Definition of Intelligibility

Attempts have been made to define what 'intelligibility' means. However, since it is a 'relative' term and as speech perception and production which are directly related to 'intelligibility' are very complicated process that involve not only linguistic but also non-linguistic cues, definitions vary from one writer to another. Catford (1950), Voegelin and Harris (1951) and many others include the Firthian concept of 'context of situation' (1) in their definition of intelligibility:

For Voegelin and Harris (1951:329), 'being intelligible means being understood by an interlocutor at a given time in a given situation! Catford (1950:7-8) considers utterances to be 'effective' if they produce appropriate and intended results in the context of situation. However, he does not equate 'intelligibility' with 'effectiveness' as an utterance may not be 'effective' although the listener understands what the speaker is saying. On the other hand, an unintelligible utterance might be apparently 'effective' by chance response 'which is appropriate to the speaker's purpose' to non-linguistic contextual clues in the situation. Thus, an utterance can only be regarded as fully 'intelligible' if it is both intelligible and effective.

Nelson (1982:61) relates 'intelligibility' to the 'sociolinguistic context' of the utterance:

The intelligibility of an utterance is concerned with what the listener understands the speaker to be saying with respect to the sociolinguistic context and involves 'intelligibility' in a fuller sense of the word.

He vaguely refers the 'fuller sense of the word' to the speaker's selection and use of correct linguistic items and the listener's appropriate response to the linguistic input.

Olsson (1978:5) does not bring in the concept of 'context of situation' in her definition but seems to equate 'intelligibility' with 'comprehension':

A linguistic message is considered to be intelligible when it is comprehended by a receiver in the sense intended by the speaker. By comprehension I mean here that a receiver can distinguish the message from other possible alternatives.

The meaning of 'comprehension' suggested does not seem to take us very far as the ability to 'distinguish the message from other possible alternatives' does not necessarily imply that the message so distinguished is always correctly distinguished and, thus, that message is understood or comprehended.

Smith and Rafiqzad (1979:371) do not differentiate 'intelligibility' from 'understanding' and think that 'comprehension' involves a great deal more than 'intelligibility'.

Our operational definition of intelligibility is capacity for understanding a word or words when spoken/read in the context of a sentence being spoken/read at natural speed, the degree of this capacity for understanding, ie the intelligibility, could be checked by constructing a cloze - procedure test..... This cloze test was not a check on comprehension, since we feel comprehension involves a great deal more than intelligibility the greater the comprehension of the context material, the more likely intelligibility will occur.

It is, however, not clear what 'a great deal more than intelligibility' refers to.

Bansal (1966:48) makes a lengthy interpretation of what he means by 'intelligibility', focusing on decoding a phonetic and phonological signal at the lexical level:

To be intelligible, the speaker must articulate his sounds and words clearly, so that the hearer does not have to stop and think what word was meant. The vowels should be pronounced with the right quality and the consonants should be sharp and clear in their articulation. If there are any elisions, obscurations or weakening of sounds in unstressed syllables, these should be in accordance with the prevalent usage of the language spoken.....

It is doubtful why only vowels should be articulated with the 'right quality' and only consonants should be articulated sharply and clearly. Perhaps, the interpretation may be rephrased as : To be intelligible, the speaker must articulate speech sounds (both vowels and consonants) in words clearly and with the right quality.

For research purposes, Tiffin's (1974 : 52-53) concept of intelligibility ends at the level of perception as he assumes that 'intelligibility' is concerned with decoding rather than with assessing 'meaning'.

I support Hick's (1982 : 135) criticism of Tiffin's concept of intelligibility in that 'production errors will result in decoding problems for the listener; however, only by comparing the productive errors with the level of perception can any conclusion be reached as to whether the various phonemic factors..... are relevant to intelligibility'. He, thus sees 'intelligibility' as a factor related to 'the decoding process' rather than 'the encoding process'.

It, thus, seems that the concept of 'intelligibility' can roughly be defined for a start as 'the understanding or comprehending of utterances by the decoding/encoding process in the context of situation which often involves the listener's response or reaction'. (See also S.2.7)

2.2 The Parameters of Intelligibility

It is believed that the parameters of intelligibility could be as narrow as limiting it to the phonetic elements only or as broad as taking every single element involved in speech communication into consideration.

Besides the awareness of 'situation', Platt, Weber and Ho (1984 :174), for instance, include the speaker's rights and attitude as to how a message should be put across in their parameter of intelligibility:

Intelligibility includes the means at one's disposal to convey a particular message and/or attitude to another person.

Kachru (1982 : 49) introduces the concept of 'cline intelligibility' to indicate reference to the linguistic proficiency of the speaker and listener, for instance, their education background, their role in a situation, their nationality etc, and, thus, intelligibility has to be defined in 'regional, national and international terms'.

Nelson (1982 : 63) provides the parameters of intelligibility for nonnative Englishes in linguistic and nonlinguistic terms. The former refers to the linguistic system functions involved in the situation, for example, stress and rhythm patterns whereas the latter refers to the social aspect of it and the introduction of loan words from L1 is, to him, both linguistic and nonlinguistic.

2.3 The Degree of Intelligibility

The degree of intelligibility normally refers to the extent to which one is understandable and Nelson (1982 : 80) thinks that the degree of intelligibility varies according to certain parameters, 'all subsumed under the context of situation'.

To a great extent, the degree of intelligibility depends on the extent of the cultural, regional background and phonological and grammatical factors shared by the speaker and listener. (See Chapters Four, Five, Six) Bansal (1966), for instance, finds higher degree^{of} intelligibility in Indian English among Indians having the same mother tongue than those who do not. (See also S.2.5.3.1) Smith and Rafiqzad (1979 : 375) have similar findings:

In every country except one (ie Korea) the listeners were able to fill in the cloze-procedure test of their fellow countrymen's text with 75% accuracy or above. (See also S.2.5.2.5)

Tench (1981 : 19) claims that the degree of intelligibility of a learner's speech depends on who the listener is and on his 'threshold of intelligibility and tolerance'. That is to say, listeners who have more experience talking with foreigners will normally have a higher 'threshold of intelligibility' than those who do not and the 'tolerance' in pronunciation is his main criterion for determining the degree of intelligibility.

2.4 Factors Influencing Intelligibility

It is possible that a person's speech may be more intelligible to one category of listeners than to another. It is equally possible that a person's speech may be more intelligible to the same listener at different time and/or at different place. There are, in fact, numerous factors which contribute to impairing or facilitating intelligibility.

2.4.1 Regional/Sociolinguistic Factors

Even among speakers from the same speech community, geographical and social status differences may affect speech intelligibility. Ward (1929:5), for instance, points out that within Britain, 'a Cockney speaker would not be understood by a dialect speaker of Edinburgh or Leeds or Truro, and dialect speakers of much nearer districts than these would have difficulty in understanding each other'. Gumperz (1962:83) also finds that the village dialects in India form 'a continuous chain from Sind to Assam', with mutual intelligibility between adjacent areas but not between relatively distant areas.

Social status seems to affect intelligibility, though to a lesser extent, among speakers of the same speech community. Halliday et al (1964:86), for instance, represent the dialect structure of England today as a 'pyramid' : the vertical plane represents class and the horizontal one, region. In their words, 'At the base, there is wide regional differentiation, widest among the agricultural workers and the lower-paid industrial workers. As one moves along the socio-economic scale, dialectal variety according to region diminishes'. Some intelligibility problems are bound to arise between the socio-economic hierarchy.

2.4.2 Physiological Factors

Kaiser (1964:102-3) asserts that certain physiological factors influence the encoding and decoding of messages not based on the linguistic system. For instance, the decoding of movement by eye through speech records such as oscillograms and spectrograms is possible. In listening, the physiological qualities of the sensory organs determine the process of decoding, perception leads to recognition in special centres in which reference patterns are stored. Moreover, the

personality of the speaker introduces physiological and psychological factors into his motor functions and gives information to the listener by means of modifications of speech sounds. For example, anger and enthusiasm may be represented by a high level of energy such as loud sounds; good health, 'somatic force' and a 'choleric' temperament may be manifested by a high intensity; cheerfulness and youth may be indicated by a high pitch, and also through pitch, the listener may receive information regarding the condition of the speaker, such as his age, his temperament and his state of mind.

2.4.3 Extralinguistic or Non-linguistic Factors

It seems clear that certain extralinguistic or non-linguistic (2) factors facilitate speech intelligibility. Catford (1950:8), for instance, asserts that an unintelligible utterance might be 'effective' by chance response to non-linguistic clues by citing the example of a hostess holding an English tea-party who could respond to a non-English speaking guest, giving him the 'tart' that he wanted through non-linguistic contextual clues in the situation, ie the guest's gestures, body postures etc.

It is also certain that non-linguistic variables affect intelligibility to some extent. For instance, sociocultural knowledge of the speaker, knowledge of the speech situation, including location, time and why it takes place, the topic of conversation etc will certainly facilitate intelligibility on the part of the listener. (For details, see Chapter Six).

Moreover, the channel by which utterances are transmitted plays an important role in intelligibility. A face-to-face conversation, with the help of gestures, facial expressions and, perhaps, clearer voice, normally has a higher degree of intelligibility than a conversation between the same participants over a telephone. Hence, telephones, tape-recordings, radio, television and other machine operated channels usually place some extra burden on the degree of intelligibility on the part of the listener especially if the listener is a non-native speaker. (See also Chapter Six, S.6.5).

2.4.4. Paralinguistic Factors

For Allen (1954:xi-xii), certain paralinguistic factors (3) such as correct speech flow and voice movement are crucial for intelligibility:

A reasonably correct speech flow is more important for intelligibility than correct sounds. It is possible to carry on an intelligible conversation in a series of mumbles

and grunts provided that voice movement is correct.

Brown (1977 : 125-155) refers 'paralinguistic' features to features other than rhythm and intonation, eg pitch range, loudness, voice setting, pause, lip setting etc and claims that these features 'affect the meaning of the message'. She further argues that paralinguistic features serve as 'signposts to guide the listener through the structure of an argument':

When the speaker is making a remark which he considers to be the central point in his argument, he will make its importance clear to the listeners by marking it with some or all of the following paralinguistic features : extended pitch range, slow tempo, precise articulation, extended timing. He may speak low in his pitch range, often with 'creaky' voice, but if the remark is then to be perceived as important, he must either utter the whole remark slowly, or extend the timing of the tonic word. (P.155)

Other linguists such as Pennington and Richards (1986), Esling and Wong (1983) also claim that paralinguistic features constitute intelligibility problems. Pennington and Richards (1986 : 210), for instance, claim that voice-setting features (4) affect intelligibility:

In learning to speak a language, mastery of a characteristic array of voice-setting features appears to constitute substantially to a native-like accent and possibly to overall intelligibility as well.

Esling and Wong (1983 : 90) make a similar claim:

When a feature of voice quality (5) figures predominantly is the setting of an ESL student's native language, but does not commonly or to the same degree in English, it is a potential obstacle to intelligibility.

2.4.5 Linguistic Factors

To a certain extent, intelligibility problems especially in the case of nonnative speakers, lie in the speaker's linguistic capability at all levels of language : For example, intelligibility may be impaired at the lexical level if a wrong word is used, at the syntactic level if some feature of grammar is erroneous or deviant from the listener's, at the segmental level if a certain phoneme is mispronounced or is pronounced differently from the listener's, at the suprasegmental level if an

utterance is produced with wrong or deviant stress, intonation or tone grouping.

There is relative importance within these various levels with reference to intelligibility. Olsson (1973), for instance, discovered that syntactic errors obstruct communication to a lesser degree than semantic errors. In Politzer's (1978) study, only mistakes in case ending were viewed as less serious than phonological errors. In Galloway's (1980) study, it was found that 'in the category of pronunciation, no group overall seemed greatly disturbed by this factor (i.e. pronunciation errors), although pronunciation accounted for 26% of the total number of errors committed by the students'. (P.430)

(For details, see Chapters Four and Five)

2.5 Previous Research on Intelligibility

Different methods have been devised to measure the general intelligibility of some type of spoken language to certain linguistic groups, or the intelligibility of a particular form of speech to a particular linguistic group. Whatever method for rating or assessment is employed, some degree of subjectivity seems inevitable. The pieces of research on intelligibility, which are summarized in Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2, cover a wide range of areas related to the present study directly or indirectly. Those which are most relevant to this study are related to the respective sections in later chapters.

2.5.1 Measurement of Intelligibility of Native Speakers' Speech

2.5.1.1 Measurement of Intelligibility of Segmental Items : Vowels

Peterson and Barry (1952:175-184) studied the relation between the vowel phonemes spoken by English native speakers and those heard by native-speaker listeners. Seventy subjects listened to seventy-six speakers' recording of a list of ten monosyllabic words which began with /h/ and ended with /d/, only differing in vowel phonemes, viz. head, hid, hod, hood, head, heard, had, who'd, hud and hawed. The results indicated that the vowel phonemes /i:/, /ɜ:/, /æ/ and /u/ were easily identified whereas /ɪ/, /ɛ/, /ɑ/, /ɔ/ and /ʌ/ and, in particular, /ɑ/ and /ɔ/ were not only difficult to identify but were rather confused.

As these items were spoken in isolation, they lacked the kind of context in which the words would occur. This is one of the main reasons why the listeners had difficulty in identifying the vowel phonemes. Moreover, as confusion of vowel phonemes such as /a/ and /ɔ/ can arise in native-speakers of English, it is not surprising that ME speakers found it difficult to identify and produce vowel phonemes such as /e/ and /æ/, /a/ and /ʌ/ etc., (See Chapter Four, S.4.3.8 and 4.3.9 and Chapter Eight, S.8.2.1)

2.5.1.2 Measurement of Intelligibility of Suprasegmental Items: Stress

Fry (1958:126-152) conducted an investigation to measure the effects of changes in duration, intensity and fundamental frequency which correlated with length, loudness, pitch and quality in stress.

Listeners were asked to judge whether they heard the verb-form or noun form of the following five parts of words : contrast, digest, object, permit and subject. He came to the conclusion that all judgements on stress depended on the interaction of various cues, for example, both duration and intensity had a considerable influence in determining stress judgement and listeners tended to perceive the test words as nouns when all segments were spoken with greater duration. Differences in fundamental frequency also affected judgement on stress in that listeners tended to perceive the syllable with higher pitch as the more stressed rather than the one with a lower pitch.. (See Chapter Four, S.4.5.4)

2.5.1.3 Measurement of Speech Intelligibility in Different Levels of Noise

Matthei and Roeper (1983:52-53) investigated the intelligibility of speech heard under noisy conditions and discovered that actual words could be heard correctly at considerably higher noise levels than nonsense words and that words in sentences could be correctly identified at even higher levels of noise than words that are 'simply presented in an unstructured list', and that words in sentences in connected discourse could be recognised at still higher level of noise. He concluded that more organization in speech signal enabled listeners to tolerate more noise in general and increased structure in the speech signal at all levels enabled listeners to rely less heavily on the analysis of the acoustic characteristics of the signal.

The use of articulation tests which are geared to measure the percentage which represents the intelligibility score of ideas correctly perceived by listeners has been investigated. Isolated words, sentences and connected sentences etc have been used in different types of articulation test. The scores can be measured either by exact percentage correct scores or by listener's opinions as in the one used by Richard and Swaffield, (1959: 77-89) Listeners used an opinion assessment scale based on different degrees of 'effort' to assess the intelligibility of five sentences reproduced in random order, set in an increasing level of noise. The scale was as follows :

- A. Complete relaxation possible: no effort required
- B. Attention necessary: no appreciable effort required
- C. Moderate effort required
- D. Considerate effort required
- E. No meaning understood with any feasible effort

The opinions were, thus, scored: E=0, D=1, C=2, B=3, A=4 and they concluded that the mid-point between B and C might be taken as the effort threshold.

(cf. intelligibility rating scale in Chapter Three, S.3.3.)

2.5.1.4 Measurement of the Efforts of the Listener's Anticipation on the Intelligibility of Heard Speech

Bruce (1958:79-97) conducted an experiment to determine the effects of the listener's anticipation on the intelligibility of speech. Twenty subjects listened to the same twelve-word sentences in the presence of noise on five occasions. The sentences fell into two groups: one group unprefaced by any indication of topic and the other prefaced on each occasion by a different word, which subjects were told was the topic to which the group referred. Only one of the sentences in the latter group was fully appropriate to each word given. It was found that whenever this conjunction occurred in the order of testing, the sentence involved reached its highest degree of intelligibility. On the other hand, when inappropriately prefaced, sentences were misinterpreted to a considerable extent. (See also Chapter Three, S.3.2.2)

2.5.1.5. Measurement of Intelligibility of Speech with and without Context

Many studies show that context is an important factor in intelligibility and that comprehension is very much increased if words are embedded in a linguistic or situational context.

Catford (1950:14) even thinks that some contexts provide so many clues to the speaker's intention that 'speech is hardly necessary at all..... Contexts which provide a minimum of clues may be termed crucial contexts. The real test of the efficiency of an utterance is its intelligibility and effectiveness in crucial contexts'. Fry (1955:151-152) asserts that intelligibility can be greatly enhanced when a context is provided:

Suppose, for example, that a message is sent to a listener in conditions in which he can recognise about 5% of the words transmitted. If he is now given information about the subject matter of the speech, information which constitutes a suitable verbal context for the distorted message, and listens to the same speech sequence a second time, he will find the intelligibility very much increased and will understand 60% to 70% of what is sent to him. The physical stimuli which he receives are the same in both hearings, but the effects of contextual information is to convert incomprehensible speech into a message which the listener can understand with relative ease.

Tiffin (1974:66) cites Miller et al's (1951:329-335) investigation into why a word is heard correctly in one context and not in another by using three types of test materials, viz (i) numerals 1-9, (ii) sentences of five major words linked by 'of', 'the' etc., (iii) nonsense syllables. They conclude that the most important variable in correct perception is the range of possible alternatives from which a test item is selected. Hence, a listener will perceive the word 'six' correctly if he expects a numeral, but cannot perceive it if it is one of several hundred alternative nonsense syllables. The reason is, with numerals the alternatives are limited but with nonsense syllables, the choices are far greater in number and the listener must perceive each segment correctly. Thus, the context in which the item occurs greatly helps to determine its intelligibility. The study also indicates that it is more difficult

to understand a word in isolation than if it is heard in a sentence. (See also Chapter Four, S.4.4. and Chapter Six, S.6.1.4 and S.6.6.4).

2.5.1.6 Measurement of the Effects of Rate of Utterance and Duration of Excerpt on Intelligibility.

In an experiment conducted by Pickett and Pollack (1963:151-164) to gauge what effects the rate of utterance and duration of excerpt from fluent speech had on intelligibility, five speakers recorded a short text at three rates of continuous utterances, ie very fast, normal and very slow. Fifteen listeners were asked to write down what they heard. The results showed that although the rate of utterance did not produce large effect on intelligibility when the effect of sample duration was taken into consideration, short samples of the text were less intelligible than long ones. On average, both fast and slow samples with similar duration had similar degrees of intelligibility. This shows that there was a close correlation between slow, precise articulation of a small amount of text and rapid, slurred articulation of a large amount of text in the same time interval. In other words, for a given duration of sample, any slurred articulation was 'compensated by covering more context, while a slow utterance may cover less context, but is articulated more clearly' (P.163). It was also found that fast utterances were slightly less intelligible than slow ones with the same duration when heard in noise.

2.5.2 Measurement of Intelligibility of Non-native Speaker's Speech

Measurements of intelligibility of non-native varieties of English have mainly dealt with native speaker's evaluation of intelligibility of discrete items, especially those involving typical error types in the non-native varieties. Others measure the intelligibility of native speakers' speech to non-native speakers.

2.5.2.1 Measurement of Intelligibility of Segmental and Supra-segmental Elements in Learner's Speech

Lado's (1961:78-80) speech test is based on the theory that intelligibility of a foreign speaker's speech depends on the use of the phoemic sound contrasts and units of the foreign language including intonation, stress, rhythm and sound segments. For him, intelligibility fails because intelligibility cannot be 'defined

formally and specifically' and because listeners have 'different degrees of skills in understanding foreign speakers'. He also disapproves of opinion-orientated scoring-scales such as the following :

1. Sufficiently approaches native speech, to be completely understandable.
2. Can be understood, though with difficulty, because there are sounds which he does not utter correctly.
3. Would not be understood by natives because his pronunciation is so different from theirs.

Lado, however, recommends the testing of specific problems by eliciting utterances that contain these problems and this can be done by asking the speaker to read aloud the material prepared for the test-words, sentences or connected speech. (See Chapter Seven, S.7.1 and 7.2)

2.5.2.2 Measurement of Intelligibility Using Speech Characteristics as Criteria

In Carroll's (1963) experiment, 16 native speakers were selected to rate three non-native speakers' (one Indian, one Yugoslavian, and one Polish) utterances according to his ten criteria of speech characteristics, viz intelligibility, 'Englishness', stress, intonation, speed, volume, continuity, pitch, voice quality and diction (ie the pronunciation of segments).

The test consisted of the reading of an intelligibility test which comprised normal sentences, meaningless sentences with English words and nonsense syllables, the reading of a story and the description of pictures. The ratings were impressionistic but the judges were mostly well-qualified phoneticians and language teachers. Carroll concluded that there was a fairly high correlation between 'stress', 'intonation' and 'diction' but a higher correlation between 'intelligibility' (ie easy versus difficult to understand) and 'Englishness' (ie very English versus most unEnglish). Hence, for him, general effectiveness in using English consists primarily of 'intelligibility' and 'Englishness'.

2.5.2.3 Measurement of Intelligibility of English Speech to Non-Native Speakers

To measure the intelligibility of English speech to non-native speakers of English, a series of experiments were carried out by Irvine (1977:308-315) on groups of students at the Polytechnic of Central London. The single word test of Fry and the sentence test of the author recorded by a native speaker were the test batteries. Thirty-four non-native speakers and twenty-five native speakers acted as subjects in the tests. It was found that the performance on these tests of the non-native English-speaking students coming from a large number of foreign countries was significantly below that of their native English-speaking counterparts.

2.5.2.4. Measurement of Intelligibility in Relation to Aural Comprehension

For an aural comprehension test, Lado (1961:205-206) suggests the exclusion of technical vocabulary and 'subject matter which is not common knowledge in the culture where the language is spoken'. Moreover, the test should not demand very high levels of intelligence or memory. He does not take these variables into consideration: 'Various speeds of delivery, various lengths of passages or various voices', or factors such as 'the acoustics of the room, the amount of background noise and the physical and emotional state' of the listeners. All that is needed is to keep these variables 'within normal bounds'.

Black et al (1965:43-48) made an investigation into the speech and aural comprehension of three groups of foreign students. Twenty-four Japanese, twenty-four Hindi and twenty-four Spanish-speaking students were divided into sub-groups according to their proficiency in aural comprehension of English, based on a test which they took as part of their orientation programme at their American university. The main aim of the research was to relate aural comprehension to 'other manifestations of speech behaviour' and not to compare the three groups of students. All the students recorded lists from an English language intelligibility test and short segments of

English prose. Three sets of measures were obtained: (i) intelligibility scores, (ii) ratings of foreignism in speech and (iii) the amount of vocalized time in a set reading task. Relative skill in aural comprehension was found to differentiate each language group in intelligibility: in each language group, the better listeners were found to be the more intelligible speakers, and they had less 'foreignism' in their speech and had spent a greater amount of time vocalizing. Thus, it was evident that, on average, the ability to receive English on the part of foreign speakers, was indicative of the merit of their English speech.

2.5.2.5 Measurement of Mutual Intelligibility through Different Varieties of English

Smith and Bisazza (1982:59-67) who believe that 'a true evaluation of one's English language comprehensibility should be based on the judgement of both native and non-native speakers', carried out an experiment to investigate whether there were significant differences in English language comprehensibility for native and non-native speakers when they were exposed to three syntactically identical but phonologically different varieties of English. Two hundred and seven subjects in seven countries ie Hong Kong, India, the Phillipines, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States, were asked to listen to the recordings of one American, one Indian and one Japanese, each reading different forms of the Michigan Test of Aural Comprehension and to answer the questions of these forms. The results showed that the greater the active exposure to English, the greater the comprehension of English, ie the American listeners who had the greatest amount of exposure to the three varieties were best at comprehending the three speakers, the ESL listeners who had greater exposure to the three varieties of English than the EFL listeners were better at comprehending the three varieties than the EFL listeners.

To validate their hypothesis that educated native-speaker speech is more likely to be intelligible to others than the educated non-native speakers, Smith and Rafiqzad (1979:371-380) collected nine recorded speech samples of different varieties of educated native and non-native speakers of English from Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, the Phillipines, Sri Lanka and the

United States, chosen by collaborators in these countries. Each speaker gave a ten-minute speech to a group of educated compatriots and the speech was recorded. Each collaborator then prepared a 'close-procedure test' of the speech by 'transcribing the passage and deleting every sixth word beginning at the end of the first page of the transcription and continuing throughout the passage until the last sentence' (P.372) The test, together with a Listening Comprehension Questionnaire, was administered to thirty to forty educated speakers selected by the collaborator. This approach was used because Smith and Rafiqzad felt that intelligibility could be measured 'by constructing a cloze-procedure test of the passage read and asking listeners to attempt to fill in the blanks of the test : the more words the listeners were able to accurately write in, the greater the speaker's intelligibility'. (P.371)

Listeners were from eleven countries, viz Bangladesh, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand. Some important findings were:

- (i) Contrary to their hypothesis, native speakers were always found to be among the least intelligible speakers with the average score of 55%.
- (ii) Only Japanese and Korean listeners found their fellow-countrymen more intelligible than the other native speakers.
- (iii) In every country except Korea, the listeners were able to fill in the cloze test of their fellow-countrymen's text with 75% accuracy or above.
- (iv) Not all listeners were able to identify their fellow-countrymen.
- (v) A speaker found to be highly intelligible in one country was likely to be found so in another.

To some extent, the results were, perhaps, not valid for these reasons:

- (i) The listeners should have had the opportunity to listen to the same passage as the variability in the level of difficulty of the passage definitely affected the degree of intelligibility and the understanding of the speakers.

- (ii) The results of the findings might have been slightly different if English native speakers instead of American native speakers had been involved in the experiment (and, in fact, both types of native speakers should have been involved) since most of the countries, except Taiwan, Japan and the Phillipines, have greater exposure to British English than American English.

(cf. results of intelligibility scores of ME with Malaysian and British listeners, Chapter Seven, S.7.4.5).

2.5.2.6 Measurement of Learner's Spoken Interlanguage through Oral Interviews

Albrechtsen et al (1980:365-395) attempted to evaluate the intelligibility of a wider range of native speakers' reactions to stretches of discourse produced by Danish learners of English in interview situations.

Eight representative extracts were selected from twenty recorded interviews on the basis of 'error density figure' (both lexical and syntactic) of which two extracts were low error density scores, two with high scores and four with average scores. Each extract lasted about two minutes and consisted of one hundred and thirty to two hundred words.

The data were evaluated by one hundred and fifty British native speakers. The subjective evaluation of the texts was performed on bipolar adjective scales and the dimensions that were considered most likely to influence the respondents' evaluation were included in the scales, viz (i) linguistic aspects eg Does the speaker use good pronunciation? bad pronunciation? (ii) content eg Is the interview insignificant? informative?, (iii) intelligibility of the text eg Is the interview easy to understand? difficult to understand? (iv) personality of the learner eg Does the speaker seem relaxed?

The objective performance analysis of the texts consisted of linguistic analysis including these eight areas ie errors in lexis, Syntax and morphology; errors in lexemes ; errors in content words; segmental phonetic errors; intonation; hesitation phenomena; communicative strategies; and rate of speech (P.381).

By correlating the subjective evaluations of comprehensibility with the results from a linguistic performance analysis, it was found that

only a number of communicative strategies correlated significantly with the comprehensibility ratings. Thus, there was no significant correlation between any of the measures of linguistic correctness and comprehensibility. This also suggests that the intelligibility of an error could not be predicted simply by considering whether the error was lexical, syntactic or phonological. In other words, whether an error impaired the intelligibility of the interlanguage or not was, perhaps, not crucially a function of its inherent qualities but of the context in which it occurred. One further finding was that low comprehensibility was also related with incorrect use of conjunctions, pronouns and coherence. (See also Chapter Five, S.5.1.2 and Chapter Seven, S.7.4.4).

2.5.3 Measurement of Intelligibility of Specific Varieties of Non-native English Speech to Native and Non-Native Speakers of English

2.5.3.1 Indian English

Bansal (1966) measured the intelligibility of educated Indian English to listeners of different nationalities, in particular, British, American, Indian, Nigerian and German listeners. The tests, recorded by four British RP speakers, twenty-four Indians with different mother tongues of Indian languages, consisted of (i) connected speech, (ii) reading of set passages, (iii) reading of sentences and word lists. Two hundred and thirty-four subjects including one hundred and forty-four British native speakers, forty-five non-native English speakers from ESL countries and forty-five non-native English speakers from EFL countries, were asked to listen to the recordings. It was found that there was a wide variation in the level of intelligibility attained by different Indian speakers in the intelligibility scores obtained with the same speaker by listeners from different countries and even by listeners from the same country. Other findings were, for example:

- (i) With British RP speakers and listeners, mutual intelligibility was as high as 97%.
- (ii) With Indian English speakers, listened to by three or more British listeners, the mean score was 70%, with a range for an individual speaker of 53% to 95%.
- (iii) Indian English was less intelligible among Indians having different mother tongues than RP was among speakers of

different dialects.

- (iv) Indian English was much less intelligible to German listeners than to British listeners.
- (v) The important factors that caused intelligibility problems in Indian English were: wrong word stress, wrong sentence stress, rhythm, lack of clear articulation, incorrect vowel length, lack of aspiration in voiceless plosives and mistakes in the distribution of vowels and consonants. (cf findings in Chapter Seven)

2.5.3.2 Ghananian English

Stevens (1965:119-20) made 'a quantitative assessment of the intelligibility which a West African pronunciation and RP respectively possessed for speakers of these two accents'. Tests were devised in a way that context was eliminated. Four lists of monosyllabic words were compiled, the first pair of lists consisted of English words formed by a single phoneme or a combination of phonemes, while the second pair were selected from monosyllabic words known to be problematic to West African speakers.

One RP speaker recorded all four lists and one speaker of Type Two pronunciation (ie Southern Ghananian) recorded a list of the first type and another of Type Two pronunciation recorded a list of the second type. About one hundred listeners, comprising mainly speakers using either Type Two pronunciation or RP, were asked to write down what they heard. The results indicated that for recordings done by RP speakers, the average score of RP-speaking subjects was 84% while the average of Type Two-speaking subjects was 62%. For recordings done by Type Two pronunciation speakers, the average scores were 27% by RP-speaking subjects and 35% by Type Two-speaking subjects. This indicated that Type Two pronunciation was less intelligible than RP pronunciation. Hence, RP was much better understood by both RP and Ghananian speakers.

Brown's (1968:180-91) findings, however, contradict Streven's in that Ghananian students understood each other's English better than the British native speakers' English. An RP speaker and some Ghananian speakers, with Twi and Ewe as their L1s, were asked to read the test items, comprising:

- (i) phonemic discrimination,
- (ii) placement of tonicity in sentences (ie sentence stress),

(iii) rhythm and intonation, at a normal conversational speed and in the accent they would use in conversation with their fellow students. Forty-five Ghanaian university students, of which thirty were Twi speakers, nine were Ewe speakers and six with other mother tongues, were requested to listen to the recordings. The results indicated that for both types of Ghanaian listeners, Ghanaian English was more intelligible than RP and within Ghanaian English, Twi listeners scored highest with Twi speakers and Ewe listeners with Ewe speakers.

Brown, however, claimed that his results did not include the intelligibility of these accents 'among others than the sample tested'. Thus, no conclusion could be made about their intelligibility to other Ghananians whose phonology in speaking English was more similar to that of their L1 and no conclusion could be drawn about the 'international intelligibility' of the accent either. (cf. findings in Chapter Seven, S.7.4.5.)

2.5.3.3 Nigerian English

Tiffin (1974) measured the intelligibility of educated Nigerian speakers of English for British listeners and analysed the main causes of intelligibility failure. The test material consisted of (i) connected speech on three chosen topics, viz school life, marriage and university life. (ii) reading of passages, (iii) phonemes, (iv) stress and intonation. The speech of one RP speaker, twenty-four Nigerian university students (including twelve Yoruba and twelve Hausa speakers) was recorded and played to two hundred and forty British listeners. It was found that results obtained in 'connected speech' correlated significantly with those in 'reading of passages' and 'stress' but not with those in 'phonemes' and 'intonation'. Partial correlation analysis indicated that stress was the major component of all aspects of intelligibility. He concluded that

- (i) rhythmic/stress errors (38.2% for all speakers), including incorrect rhythm, word stress and phrasing, constituted the greatest barrier to the intelligibility of Nigerian English.
- (ii) Segmental errors (33.0% for all speakers), including mispronunciation of vowels and consonants, constituted the next important factor in intelligibility.

- (iii) Various phonotactic errors (20.0% for all speakers), including incorrect elision, assimilation, mispronunciation of consonant clusters and metathesis, were of lesser importance to the intelligibility of Nigerian English.
 - (iv) lexical and syntactic errors (8.8% for all speakers), including incorrect and unusual lexis and syntax were of minor importance to intelligibility.
- (cf. findings in Chapter Seven)

2.5.3.4 Tanzanian English

Hicks (1982) collected samples consisting of the reading of seven set passages, four of which were reading within a genuine classroom situation and three were reading within a simulated situation. Eight educated Tanzanians rated the seven passages on a five-point scale, not very different from the one devised by Richards and Swaffield (1959):

1. Easy to understand, without any strain, ie one can relax and enjoy the passage.
2. Can be understood, but one needs to concentrate, one cannot relax.
3. Can be understood, with concentration; however, a few words and phrases are not understandable.
4. The general gist can be understood, but a lot of words and phrases cannot; thus, details in the passage are lost.
5. The general gist cannot be understood. Only individual words and phrases can be heard and understood. (P.137)

The results suggested that when decoding the spoken language, the listener had a higher degree of tolerance to certain types of errors than to others and there might be variation between listeners according to their own language background. Some of the important findings included:

- (i) The vowel errors have little or no relationship to intelligibility, provided that the errors were consistent and, therefore, predictable.
- (ii) The fossilization of the interlanguage at the level of phonology might, in fact, have a beneficial function because it eased communication and made errors predictable and, therefore, decodable.

- (iii) Pausal errors and the misplacement of tonic stress had the greatest effect on the intelligibility of Tanzanian English. (cf. findings in Chapter Seven).

2.6 Criteria for Determining Speech Intelligibility between NSs and NS-NNSs

Based on what I have discussed and reviewed so far, it is possible to set up some criteria for determining the degree of intelligibility in native and non-native varieties of English, and I have, attempted to summarize them in Diagrams 2.1. and 2.2.

Three major criteria which are considered to affect speech intelligibility in both native and non-native varieties of English are identified, ie linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic criteria. For example: Linguistic criteria that may affect intelligibility include phonological features at the segmental, suprasegmental, lexical and syntactic levels; paralinguistic criteria include features which are related to suprasegmental features eg voice quality and lip-setting; non-linguistic criteria include the channel, and environment in/by which the message is put across. It also includes knowledge about the listener which may affect the communicative strategies used.

Two diagrams are needed: one for speech intelligibility between NSs and the other for speech intelligibility between NS-NNSs. This is deemed necessary because some of the criteria listed in native varieties may not be applied to those in non-native varieties eg In NS-NS interactions, 'variation' of vowels or consonants, between the speaker and the listener may affect intelligibility. By 'variation', I mean the 'dialectal differences in the native variety'. Gimson (1970:106), for instance, gives this example:

.... the vowel /æ/, the most open of the RP true front vowels, is closer than fully open,but regional dialects often show a greater qualitative separation of these phonemes. Thus, where RP/e/ and /æ/ have the values described, other types of English will have value C [ɛ] and C [a] or [ɑ] or even [ä].

On the other hand in NS-NNS interactions, 'deviation' of vowel or consonant phonemes of the NNS may affect intelligibility. By 'Deviation', I mean the 'marked difference from an accepted norm of a native variety such as RP, eg replacement of /θ/ with /t̪/. ' (See Chapter Five, S.4.3.8, 4.3.9). Such deviation is sometimes regarded as an 'error'.

Likewise, in NS-NS interactions, the use of alternative lexical item may occasionally affect intelligibility eg 'Is there an elevator (instead of 'lift') in this building?' The choice of the lexical word 'elevator' (a term used in the United States) is mainly geographical and cannot be regarded as an 'error'. On the other hand, in NS-NNS interactions, 'wrong' lexical items may affect intelligibility eg 'what have you done to the ear (for handle) of your mug?'. The wrong word choice here is considered an 'error'.

Diagram 2.1

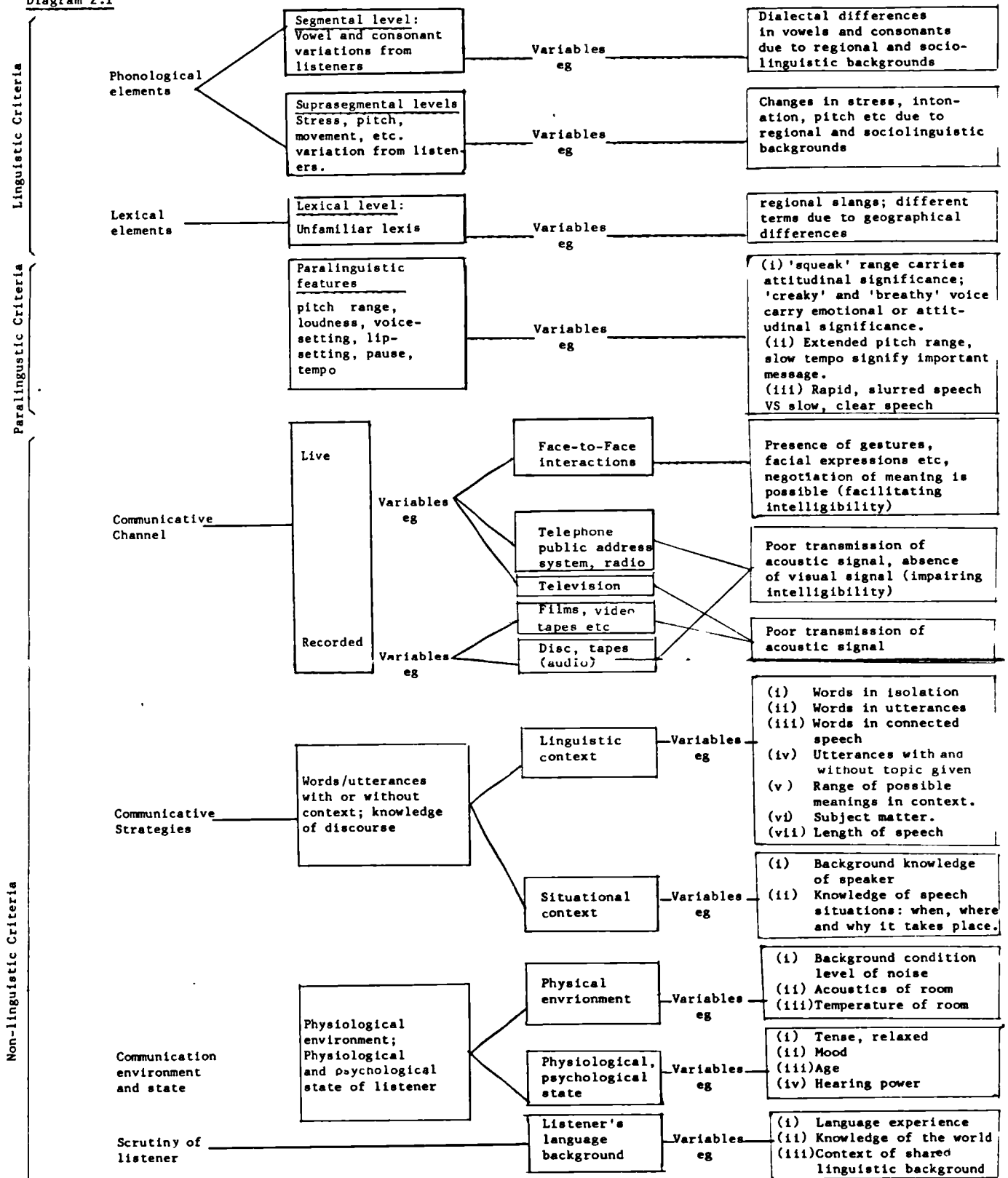
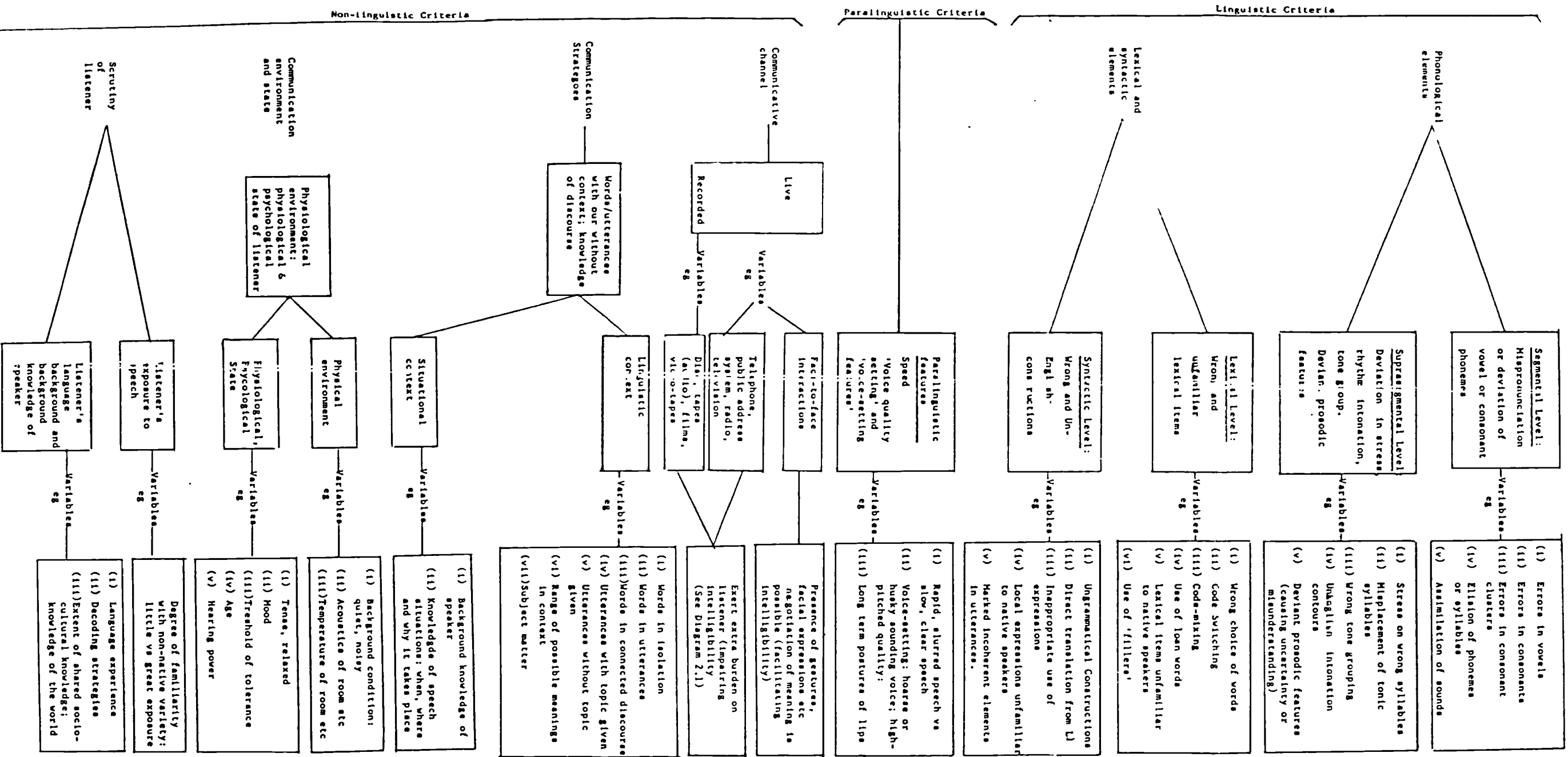


Diagram 2.2

Criteria for Determining Speech Intelligibility: NNS to NS of English



2.7 The Concept of Intelligibility in the Present Study

As was pointed out in Section 2.1, the large number^{of} variables involved in intelligibility make it difficult to define what 'intelligibility' centrally is. Before an operational definition of 'intelligibility' (6) for this study can be worked out, a number of factors related to intelligibility have to be taken into consideration.

(i) In one sense, 'intelligibility' can be defined from a psychological point of view, ie in terms of how a listener understands a message. Language is usually perceived by the mind and not by the ear. Thus, one cannot define 'intelligibility' only in terms of perfect pronunciation because apart from the perception of the acoustic features of the utterance the listener usually brings in attitudes, emotional and mental states, judgement on what is heard, prior knowledge etc which all influence the intelligibility of speech.

(ii) It is very important to take the interlocutor into account when defining 'intelligibility', ie who the speaker is intelligible to. A speaker's speech may be intelligible to one interlocutor, partially intelligible to another, but totally unintelligible to yet another. In other words, the degree of intelligibility depends very much on whether the interlocutor shares linguistic and non-linguistic norms with the speaker. For instance, generally speaking, there is no intelligibility problem if the interaction takes place between two native speakers of the same language from the same region. There may be considerable intelligibility problems if it is an NS-NNS interaction. However, there may hardly be any intelligibility problem if the NS is accustomed to the NNS's speech.

(iii) There are two directions in 'intelligibility' ie 'intelligibility' can be defined as a 'decoding' or an 'encoding' process. By to 'decode ', I mean 'to discover the meaning of the speaker's utterances'. By to 'encode', I mean 'to turn the speaker's message into code ie a system of audible signals'. Thus, 'intelligibility' may be a matter of speakers having the ability to produce sounds which convey messages to listeners in which case the speaker is 'intelligible' to the listener; or 'intelligibility' may be a matter of encoding messages in such a way that they are grasped by listeners in which

case the message is 'intelligible'; or 'intelligibility' may be a matter of listeners having certain kinds of knowledge and skill which enable them to interpret the sound signals reaching them in which case the listener has ability to comprehend. For clear message transmission all these are necessary. If any one of these is flawed there may be lack of intelligibility.

(iv) 'Intelligibility' can be measured at different levels of a language ie the phonological, lexical, syntactic and discourse levels. Usually in the process of speech perception, the phonetic analysis of a speech signal involves the integration of acoustic information with other information that is available to the listener. The listener actively computes the phonetic content of a message by using all kinds of background knowledge. Thus, it is not only the listener's expectation of certain sound patterns that influence

what he hears, his expectation of semantic , syntactic, discourse patterns and sociocultural knowledge of the speaker also affect what he hears.

(v) For research purposes, the definition of 'intelligibility' has to match up to the data for analysis and to the research procedure. For instance, if the data for analysis only consist of phonemes, 'intelligibility' can only be defined narrowly in terms of phonemic distinctions eg whether the distinction between /æ/ and /e/ of the speaker is clear. The definition of 'intelligibility' will be how well these pairs of phonemes are produced. Likewise, if the research data only involve lexis, 'intelligibility' can be defined narrowly in terms of lexical correctness , eg whether the difference in meaning between 'come' and 'go' is understood. The definition of 'intelligibility' will then be how appropriate such words are used in context.

(vi) For research purposes, the concept of 'intelligibility' has to be related to where and why the research is to be carried out. For instance, speaking specifically of the present study, the 'intelligibility' of ME has to be related to Malaysian needs: there is no point in measuring ME with Nigerian speakers because there is very little opportunity for Malaysians to get in touch with Nigerians. Thus, it would be more beneficial to measure ME with speakers in countries which are related to Malaysia educationally, politically, financially or technologically. eg Britain, America and Japan.

(vii) Again for research purposes, it would perhaps be advisable to work out an operational definition of 'intelligibility' which can be tested. eg a person's speech is intelligible if 80% of his utterances is intelligible to 60% of the listeners where the listeners are selected on a certain basis.

In the light of the above, an operational definition of 'intelligibility' of the present study can be worked out : For the purpose of this study, ten oral interviews (Chapter Three) were taken as the main corpus for measuring the intelligibility of ME for 'naive' British listeners (Chapter Three, S.3.2.1) The listening procedure was a decoding process by which the British listeners had to interpret orally (ie by paraphrasing or repeating) as exactly as possible what they had heard by means of all the linguistic and nonlinguistic codes available to them as well as their own background knowledge and judgement. In this sense, the message was transmitted to them via both the mind and the ear. Thus, 'intelligibility' will be measured at both linguistic and non-linguistic levels. The degree of intelligibility will not be defined in absolute terms as is the case in (vii) above, but in relative terms, ie in terms of five degrees of intelligibility, (Chapter Three, S.3.3) which are still testable.

In a word, I have attempted to set up the operational definition of 'intelligibility' in a quite specific way. ie as 'the decoding and interpretation by 'naive' British listeners of utterances produced by ME speakers, measured in terms of relative degree'. By interpretation, I mean 'the process of conveying the possible meaning of utterances to the researcher'. The message, thus, conveyed can be either totally correct, partially correct or totally incorrect. The five degrees of intelligibility on the intelligibility rating scale determine at which level of intelligibility the utterances should be rated.

In this chapter, I have discussed some of the variables involved in 'intelligibility' and reviewed research related to it as well as set up the operational definition of 'intelligibility' in the present study. In the next chapter, I shall discuss briefly the data used to measure the intelligibility of ME and the research procedure that will be employed for measuring intelligibility.

NOTES

- (1) A specific term in Firthian linguistic theory, deriving from the work of the anthropologist. Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942). In this theory, meaning is seen as a multiple phenomenon, its various facets being relatable on one hand to features of the external world, and on the other hand to the different levels of linguistic analysis, such as phonetics, grammar and semantics. Contexts of situation refers to the whole set of external world features considered to be relevant to the analysis of an utterance at these levels. (Crystal, 1980:88)
- (2) In the most general sense, 'extralinguistic' refers to anything in the world (other than language) in relation to which language is used - the 'extralinguistic situation' (Crystal, 1980:140).
- (3) A term used in suprasegmental phonology to refer to variations in tone of voice which seem to be less systematic than prosodic features (especially intonation and stress). Examples would include the controlled use of breathy or creaky voice, spasmodic features (such as giggling while speaking) and the use of secondary articulations (such as lip-rounding or nasalization) to produce a tone of voice signalling attitude, social role, or some other language-specific meaning. Some analysts broaden the definition to include kinesic features; some exclude paralinguistic features from linguistic analysis. (Crystal, 1980:256)
- (4) Pennington and Richards use 'voice-setting features' to refer to 'general articulatory characteristics of stretches of speech', ie the tendency of speakers of a particular language to adopt certain habitual positions of articulation in connected speech eg certain male Japanese and Arabic speakers as speaking their language (or English) with a hoarse or husky-sounding voice, or of female speakers from cultures as speaking with a high-pitched, 'pinched' quality to their voices.
- (5) Esling and Wong use 'voice quality setting' to refer to the 'long-term postures of the larynx, pharynx, tongue, lip etc' and 'long-term laryngeal configurations reflected in the diverse phonation types. It may function linguistically, to characterise the particular language or dialect or social

group..... or paralinguistically, to signal mood or emotion in conversational contexts or extralinguistically, to characterise or identify the individual speaker'. eg a quasi-permanent tendency to keep the lips in a rounded position throughout speech, or a habitual tendency to keep the body of the tongue slightly retracted into the pharynx while speaking.

(6) This thesis only discusses 'speech intelligibility'.
'Intelligibility' related to the written language will not be dealt with.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DATA AND RESEARCH PROCEDURE

In Chapter two, I have discussed some criteria for determining the intelligibility of a nonnative variety of language and argued how the operational definition of 'intelligibility' for this study has come into being. The definition does not cover all the criteria mentioned because I am only primarily concerned with the criteria of intelligibility which can be related to the research procedure of the present study.

Thus, in this Chapter, I shall discuss briefly the data used to measure intelligibility and why the oral interviews were chosen as the main corpus for measuring intelligibility. This will be followed by a description of the research procedure, e.g. the selection of listeners, the listening procedure, the intelligibility scoring system, the scoring procedure etc., and an overview of the system of analysis.

To facilitate the reading ^{of} later chapters, some terms used in the analysis of the main corpus will be defined. The Chapter ends with a brief description of the discourse structure of the oral interviews.

3.1 Intelligibility Test Materials

3.1.1 Choosing a Corpus

Various types of intelligibility tests designed for measuring different parameters of intelligibility have been discussed in Chapter Two. The most common test batteries for measuring a nonnative variety of English are : reading of lists of words, as used by Black et al. (1965), Strevens (1965), Bansal (1966), Brown (1968), Tiffin (1974) and Irvine (1977); reading of lists of sentences, as used by Carroll (1963, Black et al. (1965), Brown (1968) and Irvine (1977); reading of set passages, as used by Bansal (1966), Tiffin (1974), Smith and Rafiqzad (1979) and Hicks (1982; connected speech, as used by Bansal (1966) and Tiffin (1974).

None of these test batteries for measuring intelligibility was used in the main corpus of the present study. My contentions are :

- (1) Reading of words in isolation : This is an ideal test for measuring the intelligibility of discrete sounds in words and detecting errors occurring at the segmental level. However, the measurement of intelligibility by such a test does not go beyond

the phonemic level. Moreover, it only focuses on the 'production' of words in a purely mechanical sense.

(ii) Reading of preset isolated sentences : This may be a good test for measuring segmental and suprasegmental errors, for instance, stress and intonation. However, the measurement of intelligibility cannot be extended to the lexical and syntactic levels because the reading is preset.

(iii) Reading of set passages : Like the reading of isolated sentences, this type of test may measure intelligibility at both the segmental and suprasegmental levels. However, since subjects only read from set passages, correlation between lexical/syntactic errors and intelligibility cannot be established unless the passage is misread. Moreover, this is not an effective method of gauging nonnative speakers' speech as reading aloud is itself a rather special skill. How well a nonnative speaker can read a passage aloud depends to some extent on how much he can comprehend the passage. If the reader concentrates too much on the graphic elements, the way he reads may be quite different from his usual spoken discourse strategies he employs. Besides, reading and speaking are such different skills that the stress and intonation patterns used in reading are bound to differ from those employed in normal speech. Furthermore, as tone grouping or pausal phenomena in reading may depend considerably on the reader's degree of comprehension of the passage, as they do also on the punctuation and lineation of the written text, they are likely to be even more different from his usual speech. While reading, the reader normally focuses his attention on phonic articulation and, thus, reading often induces a more 'careful' pronunciation than spontaneous speech.

Ideally, the measurement of the intelligibility of a nonnative variety of spoken language should involve spontaneous speech of the subjects under no predetermined conditions. A bit of continuous speech from a subject, therefore, would seem to be an appropriate datum for measuring the intelligibility of such a variety. The only difficulty with this is that usually the subject is the sole speaker and is assigned a topic to talk about. As a result, his vocabulary tends to centre around that topic only, and there is no way to find out how well he can

communicate in actual situations where asking and answering questions - involving topic shift - are some of the main tasks.

Hence, the most suitable data would be conversation of some sort between two or more interlocutors, which is impromptu and takes place in a real situation. This would be a true reflection of the subject's speech. It is for this reason that ten oral interviews (see below) were taken as the main corpus for measuring the intelligibility of ME.

3.1.2. The Selection and Description of the Data

3.1.2.1. Data Collection One : Oral Interviews - the Main Corpus

(i) General Remarks

Ten representative extracts were selected from twenty recorded oral interviews on the basis of 'racial ratio' and other criteria. (see (ii) below). The twenty interviews were recorded by three colleagues of mine, all of whom were English language instructors at the Language Centre of Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang, Malaysia. The interviews were actual interviews held to diagnose students' level of proficiency in spoken English in order to stream them into appropriate levels of the Spoken English courses offered at the Language Centre. The recordings were made in July, 1984 for the 1984/85 Academic Session. One of the interviewers, who was the chief interviewer and in charge of the Spoken English courses, was a native speaker of English. The other two interviewers were Malaysian Indians. Each interview session lasted between two and seven minutes.

(ii) Selection of Subjects

Of the twenty interviews recorded, unfortunately, only two students were Indians, three were Malays and the rest, Chinese. As a result, all the Indian and Malay students were selected as subjects.

Of the fifteen Chinese students, five were chosen as subjects on these criteria : (a) as was pointed out in Chapter One, Section 1.5.3, one of the main aims of this study was to investigate to what extent the Second Variety of ME was intelligible to British listeners, the spoken English of the five selected Chinese students manifested most of the features of the Second Variety, (b) as far as possible, first year students from Chinese-medium schools were chosen (and, in fact, this is one of the categories of students who need to improve their spoken English urgently) : Apart from Subject 9 who had both Chinese and

Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction in school, the rest were from Chinese-medium schools, (c) for the purpose of analysis, homogeneity of the students' L1 was taken into account: Apart from subject 1 whose L1 was Cantonese, the rest had Hokkien as their L1; (d) Selection was also made to exclude interviews which were either too long or too short. Interviews which lasted between three and six minutes were chosen.

Nine out of the ten subjects selected were first year students at the University who had a reasonably homogeneous language experience in terms of years of study : They had all studied English for 11 or 12 years. The remaining subject, a Malay, was one of the University graduates who had been working in the University for 3 years. It has to be pointed out that there was still a wide range of language proficiency in the main corpus although the selection was not made at random.

Table 3.1 gives a brief description of the background knowledge of each of the subjects.

Table 3.1. Background Knowledge of Subjects

Interview number	Subject number	Ethnic group	Male/ Female	First language	Medium of Instruction	Highest exam passed in English with grades	Major field of study in University	Year
One	1	Chinese	Female	Cantonese	Chinese	SPM 121 C5 SPM 122 A2	Chemistry	1
Two	2	Chinese	Male	Hokkien	Chinese	SPM 122 P7	Economics	1
Three	3	Chinese	Male	Hokkien	Chinese	SPM 122 P7	Chemistry	1
Four	4	Chinese	Male	Hokkien	Chinese	SPM 121 P7 SPM 122 P8	Mathematics	1
Five	5	Malay	Male	B. Malaysia	B. Malaysia	SPM 122 P8 General English, Level II:C	Development Studies	graduated
Six	6	Indian	Male	Tamil	Tamil/ B. Malaysia	SPM 122 P8	Computer Science	1
Seven	7	Malay	Male	B. Malaysia	English/ B. Malaysia	SC C6	Social Sciences	1
Eight	8	Indian	Male	Tamil	English/ B. Malaysia	SPM 122 P7	Mass Communications	1
Nine	9	Chinese	Male	Hokkien	Chinese/ B. Malaysia	SPM 122 C4	Malay Literature	1
Ten	10	Malay	Female	B. Malaysia	B. Malaysia	MCE P7	Social Development	1

(iii) Procedure and Content of the Oral Interviews

The interviews were a normal part of the University procedure which aimed at gauging students' competency in spoken English in order to channel them into the appropriate levels of the spoken English courses offered at the Language Centre. (2) Two interviewers were involved in each session.

The planning of the interviews was done by me and the interviewers were requested to follow the plan as closely as possible and record as many interview sessions as possible. Very briefly, the interviews were planned as follows: The interviewers began the interview with everyday conversation to put the student at ease, build up his confidence in speaking and to gauge the general level of ability in oral communication. This led on to a brief discussion on some topical subject. The interviewer might start with an easy or medium difficulty discussion question, according to the level of the response he got from the student in the everyday conversation. For instance, an easy question might ask the student to name or list a number of items. eg 'What television programmes do you watch during the week?' A slightly more difficult question might ask him to describe his favourite programmes. A more difficult one would ask him to compare two programmes, one good and one bad and explain his reasons. The rationale would be that naming and listing was easier than describing which was easier than comparing and justifying. During the discussion, the interviewer would help the student to prolong the discussion by asking questions related to the topic for discussion and the questions posed would naturally be of increasing levels of difficulty. However, if the interviewer found that the student knew too little about the topic, he might move on to another topic.

It can be seen from the full content of the interviews (Appendix A (1)) that in some cases, the students could only handle everyday conversation and could not take part in even the most simple discussion. In such cases, the interview sessions were generally short and hardly any topics were discussed.

Topics for everyday conversation in the ten interviews included students' daily life and hobbies, courses they were taking in the University, life in the University campus, why they chose to take the spoken English course etc. Many of these topics were developed into full scale discussion topics. Topical subjects included

descriptions of the students' hometown, comparison between two towns or cities, favourite television programmes, opinions on the new television network, TV 3 (See Chapter One, S.1.4.1) in Malaysia, activities during the orientation week at the University etc. A full transcription of the interviews in orthography can be found in Appendix A (1).

(iv) Instrumentation and Recording of the Oral Interviews

The interviews were held in a lecture room at the Language Centre. A portable 'Sony' CFS-300S model stereo cassette-recorder, measured 46 x 14 cm in size, with a built-in microphone and a 'Hitachi' compact cassette C60 tape were used for recording. To relieve the students from being nervous, they were only told that the interview was just a formality which helped to stream them into appropriate levels of the Spoken English courses and were not told about the research purposes of the recording. Thus, apart from the eagerness to know which level of Spoken English they would take, other unnatural tensions were reduced as far as possible. As the cassette recorder was placed nearer to the interviewers than the students, some parts of the students' utterances were slightly faint. However, only a small proportion of the utterances was affected: approximately 2 or 3 phrases in an utterance in Interview Seven (See Appendix A (1)) could not be heard and were, thus, unintelligible. Several utterances of the students and the interviewers, viz. Interviews Three, Four, Five, Six and Ten were not recorded at the beginning of the interviews because the interviewers forgot to press the recording button in time. Interview Nine ended abruptly. This could be due to the fact that the interviewer forgot to stop the recording at the end of the interview and by rewinding the tape for recording the following session, he accidentally erased part of the last few utterances.

Though the lecture room was air-conditioned, it was not sound-proof. As most probably the door was left ajar while the recording was in progress, some background noise can be heard on the tape. For example, the conversation of some students outside the room waiting for their turn for the interviews. Most parts of the recordings, however, could be heard quite clearly. The ten selected interview recordings were retaped on to a 'Sony' HF-S.90 tape for convenience of playing and listening.

As the students' response to every question was spontaneous, unprepared and unrehearsed, their speech was authentic and all the

strong and weak points in their speaking ability were revealed genuinely. The analysis of their errors in spoken English and the measurement of the intelligibility of their speech for British listeners should, therefore, be sound and reliable.

3.1.2.2. Subsidiary Corpora

In addition to the main corpus, I collected some further materials when I returned to Malaysia to do field work in February 1985, so that they could be used for comparison and correlation with and for justifying the findings in the main corpus. These materials were recorded in a sound-proof recording studio with the help of three trained language laboratory assistants at the Language Centre, thus ensuring high technical quality. The materials included (i) in the following :

(i) Data Collection Two - Reading of Words and Sentences

D.C. Two (a) - Reading of Words

Twenty-four words, taken from the ten oral interviews which contained the subjects' problem phonemes, were read by five out of the ten subjects in the oral interviews and the readings were recorded. Unfortunately the other five of the ten subjects could not be contacted during my stay in Penang and, thus, did not come for the recording. Three of the five recordings (one Malay, one Chinese and one Indian) were used for research purposes.

D.C. Two (b) - Reading of Sentences

Eighteen syntactically erroneous utterances, all taken from the ten oral interviews, together with the corrected versions, were read by the same five subjects and, the readings were recorded. Each of the subjects read both his/her own erroneous utterances and the corrected version. In the case of the utterances of those who did not come for the recording, other subjects of the same ethnic group were requested to perform the task. The subjects were not told about the recording in advance. The recordings were later edited in such a way that the same listeners would not listen to the erroneous utterances and the corrected version of the same utterances.

A full transcription of these recordings in orthography can be found in Appendix B (1) and B (2). (For corrected version, see Chapter Seven, S.7.2.3).

(ii) Data Collection Three - Summary

The recorded oral interview One in Data Collection One was used for this piece of data collection. (For details of the procedure and the data, see Chapter Seven, S.7.3).

3.2 The Listening Procedure

3.2.1 Selection of Listeners

The fact that there was hardly any communication breakdown between the chief interviewer, a British native-speaker who had been teaching English in the Language Centre for three years, and the subjects during the interviews suggests that people who are accustomed to ME will find all kinds of utterances intelligible. There were only three occasions when communication did break down: In Interview One, the interviewer could not understand what D.R. was. In Interview Nine, communication broke down when the subject used the Bahasa Malaysia word 'tanjung', and the interviewer could not understand the subject's mispronounced word 'recreation'.

The ideal native-speaker listeners would, therefore, be 'naive' and British ie those British who have almost no knowledge about ME and preferably who have no association with people from Malaysia and the selected seven British listeners met these criteria. The educational background of the listeners was not a very important factor because the content of the interviews did not demand a highly knowledgeable person to follow the interviews. Hence, native-speakers of different professions were selected to listen to the recordings. (Table 3.2) Three Malaysians were also requested to listen to the tape. Like the selection of subjects, the selection was based on 'racial ratio' ie one Malay, one Chinese, and one Indian. (Table 3.2)

Table 3.2 Allocation and background knowledge of the listeners

Data Collection	No of listeners	Listener number	Nationality/ Race	Profession	Male/female
One: Oral Interview	10	Listener 1	British	Lecturer	Female
		Listener 2	British	Editor	Female
		Listener 3	British	Student	Female
		Listener 4	British	Sales-assistant	Female
		Listener 5	British	Nurse	Female
		Listener 6	British	Secretary	Female
		Listener 7	British	Teacher	Male
		Listener 8	Malaysian/ Malay	Language instructor	Female
		Listener 9	Malaysian/ Indian	Teacher	Male
		Listener 10	Malaysian/ Chinese	Teacher	Female
Two: (a) Reading of words	6	Listener 11	British	Nurse	Female
		Listener 12	British	Housewife	Female
		Listener 13	British	Teacher	Female
		Listener 14	Malaysian/ Malay	Housewife	Female
		Listener 15	Malaysian/ Chinese	Student	Female
		Listener 16	Malaysian/ Indian	Student	Female
(b) Reading of Sentences	6	Listener 17	British	Nurse	Female
		Listener 18	British	Housewife	Female
		Listener 19	British	Teacher	Female
		Listener 20	Malaysian/ Malay	Housewife	Female
		Listener 21	Malaysian/ Chinese	Student	Female
		Listener 22	Malaysian/ Indian	Student	Female
Three:	10		British	Students	
Summary	16		Malaysian	Students	

A total of forty eight listeners, twenty three British and twenty five Malaysians were involved in listening to the tapes.

3.2.2 Method of Listening : D. C. One and D. C. Two

Ideally, it would have been better to have had all the listening sessions in identical conditions. For instance, in a sound-proof room with facilities for listening. This, however, could not be put into practice because most of the listeners were only available either at that place of work or at home.

The question of whether individual or group listening sessions should be held was considered. There are, of course, advantages and disadvantages in adopting either of the methods. The cases against holding individual listening sessions was that, as each listening session took approximately two hours for D.C. One and thirty minutes for D.C. Two, it would be very time consuming to hold all the sessions. On the other hand, if group listening sessions were held, it would be difficult to get all the listeners together to listen to the tapes at the same time. Moreover, it was not easy to find a sound-proof room with good acoustic conditions. Without such facilities, those listeners who were not sitting near enough to the tape-recorder might not be able to hear clearly. After weighing the pros and cons, it was decided to hold individual listening sessions with listeners listening to the tape directly and sitting as close as possible to the tape-recorder.

The question of whether oral or written responses from the listeners was required was also considered. Tiffin (1974) rejected oral responses on these grounds: (i) they were only possible with individual listening sessions, (ii) there was no guarantee that the listener would reveal to him all the words or phrases he had not understood, (iii) no permanent record could be obtained for further study and analysis at a later date. (In fact, Tiffin held both individual and group listening sessions and, thus, both oral and written responses were obtained.) On the contrary, I would prefer oral responses : the first reason given by Tiffin was not a problem because all my listening sessions were individual. A permanent record could be obtained if the oral responses were recorded and sufficient notes were taken while the listening session was in progress. As for the second reason, I did not agree with Tiffin as I

believe that this was the best method for the listeners to reveal to the researcher what he could and could not understand and make comments when necessary.

It was difficult to estimate exactly how far the acoustic conditions differed in each of the rooms used for listening. Nevertheless, attempts were made to ensure that all listening sessions took place in a reasonably quiet room free from disturbing and distracting noises such as traffic and talking.

(i) Listening to D.C. One : Oral Interviews

Like Bansal (1966), Tiffin (1974) divided the text of the connected speech into units of approximately the same length and asked the listeners to reproduce as exactly as possible what he had heard, orally in individual sessions, and in writing in group sessions. Wherever possible, units were divided into sense groups (3) or groups with appropriate tonality, ranging in length from three to sixteen words, with a mean length of 9.8 words. During the listening sessions, the connected speech texts were played unit by unit, the tape recorder being stopped while the listeners wrote down what they had heard.

A similar approach was used in the listening procedure of the oral interviews. The listeners were, likewise, told to reproduce orally as exactly as possible what the subjects had said. However, unlike in Tiffin's approach, the texts were not divided into units for listening but for scoring purposes. (S.3.3) The listeners themselves were monitoring the tape-recorder : as soon as they heard an utterance, or sometimes a sense group or just a one-word answer, they stopped the tape and reproduced what they had heard. This method was, to me, more flexible on the part of the listeners as they were in control of the machine, they knew exactly how much they could absorb and remember and, thus, when they should pause for interpretation. Using this method, I could also find out exactly which utterance or part of an utterance was totally intelligible, partially intelligible or totally unintelligible to the listeners and the reasons if they made a comment on it. On occasions when the listeners lost their concentration or missed a word or a phrase accidentally, they could rewind the tape and listen to that part of the utterance again. Since this method involved an active interaction between the listeners and the researcher, all

doubts which might arise in written response could be cleared up there and then.

Before each listening session began, listeners were thoroughly and properly briefed on what they had to do while they were listening to the tapes. For instance, they were told roughly what the subject matter of the interview was. It was felt that this was justifiable in that it provided the listeners with a framework within which they focused their attention. The names of important places (i.e. proper names of towns and cities and the name of the University, USM) were also revealed to the listeners. They were also told to interpret the subjects' responses only. Of course the listeners had to concentrate on the interviewers' questions as they elicited information for the subjects' responses.

(ii) Listening to D.C. Two : Reading of Words and Sentences

The method of listening was the same as the one used in D.C. One.

However, since the recordings only comprised the reading of words and sentences, I had control over the tape-recorder.

(iii) Listening to D.C. Three : Summary

The method of listening will be discussed in Chapter Seven, Section 7.3.

3.3 The Scoring System : Oral Interviews

Tiffin (1974:134) used the divided units as the basis for calculating the intelligibility scores for connected speech. His Scoring system was as follows : 'A correctly written response had to contain all the key content and structural words giving meaning to a particular unit. Hesitation phenomena such as "you see", "I mean", "Well" etc., were ignored. A unit was marked as incorrect if an important element was misinterpreted by the listener. In other words, a unit was marked as either correct or incorrect. There were no partial scores.' e.g.

/from stories I have heard from people/

response : /from stories I have had from people/
was considered incorrect whereas

/because I had already known the place/

response : /because I have already known the place/
was considered correct.

To a great extent, this scoring system was valid. However, the consideration of whether a response is correct or incorrect became a much more complicated matter if it was not as straightforward as the examples cited above. Moreover, it was doubtful whether 'an important element' meant content word or other elements in the utterance and how the decision was made. Besides, this method of scoring was an advantage to the weaker subjects in the sense that whether only one key word of a unit was misunderstood or not understood or whether the whole unit was not understood, it was marked incorrect and the subject, thus, scored zero in the unit. Although it is right to claim that key content or structural words always give meaning to a particular utterance, the wrong interpretation of a structural or content word may not necessarily imply that the whole utterance is totally unintelligible. In other words, I believe in a continuum of intelligibility and so intelligibility should be measured in terms of degrees or levels of intelligibility. Hence five degrees of intelligibility were identified in my scoring system : (Table 3.3)

Table 3.3 The intelligibility rating scale

Degree	Specification of degree of intelligibility	Sign used in scoring	h = heard
1	totally intelligible	++ h	
2	intelligible	+ h	
3	fairly intelligible	h	
4	partially intelligible	- h	
5	totally unintelligible	-- h	

Explanation of the five degrees of intelligibility

1. Totally intelligible : This first degree of intelligibility included utterances which were correctly produced by the subject and correctly heard by the listener. It included utterances which were free from lexical and syntactic errors.
2. Intelligible : This second degree of intelligibility included utterances which were wrongly produced by the subject but correctly heard by the listener. The errors could be lexical or syntactic and the listener either interpreted them through self-correction without realizing it or reproduced them exactly with the message understood.

3. Fairly intelligible : This third degree of intelligibility included utterances which were correctly or incorrectly produced by the subject. The listener was not certain what a certain key word or phrase in the utterance was. As a result, he might pause to guess what it was from context. If the guess was correct, it fell into this degree of intelligibility. If it was a wrong guess or if he gave up attempting to interpret it, it was categorized in the fourth degree.
4. Partially intelligible : This fourth degree of intelligibility included utterances which were correctly or incorrectly produced by the subject. The listener misinterpreted them or misunderstood them, either at word or phrase level. (See Chapter Four, S.4.2.5) It also included key words or phrases which the listener could not fully interpret but the gist of the utterance was still intelligible.
5. Totally unintelligible : This fifth degree of intelligibility included utterances which were correctly or incorrectly produced by the subject. The listener could not interpret the entire utterance. Also, he might be able to hear one or two words in the whole utterance but could not work out the message at all. (For examples, see S.3.4)

Even with the scoring system adopted, there were occasions when ad hoc judgements had to be made as to which degree of intelligibility a particular utterance should be rated. For instance, the listener's minor tense changes, substitution of one determiner for another or rephrasing parts of utterances without any change in the meaning of the utterance, were rated the second degree ie intelligible. As was pointed out in Chapter Two, whatever method for measuring intelligibility is employed, some degree of subjectivity is inevitable. However, to ensure consistency, the utterances in the interviews were scored and rescored.

3.4 The Scoring Procedure - Oral Interviews

For the convenience of scoring and analysis, the transcription of the oral interviews (only the subjects' responses) was divided into units of utterance:(App. A(2)) the units might be a whole utterance, a sense group or a group with appropriate tonality, ranging from two to seventeen words in each unit, with the mean length of 8.3 words, (Table 3.4) One word answers such as 'Yes', 'No', 'Okay' were not counted

as a unit of utterance. Two units of utterance in the transcription were not counted in the units of utterance for scoring : (i) Utt.5 in Int. Seven was not counted because it was partly unintelligible; (ii) Utt.15 in Int. Nine was not counted because part of the utterance had been erased accidentally. (See App. A(2)). Fillers such as 'la', 'ah' etc., were not counted in the number of words in the texts. The units of utterance for D.C. One can be tabulated as follows :

Table 3.4 Units of utterance and number of words in oral interviews

Interview number	Subject number	No. of words used by subjects in interviews	No. of units of utterance	Average no. of words per utterance
One	1	233	26	8.9
Two	2	93	13	7.1
Three	3	139	21	6.6
Four	4	201	23	8.7
Five	5	142	14	10.1
Six	6	235	29	8.1
Seven	7	160	19	8.4
Eight	8	150	23	6.5
Nine	9	126	15	8.4
Ten	10	460	44	10.4
Mean Length Per Utterance				8.3 words

The scoring procedure for D.C. One was as follows :

During the listening session, I had a copy of the transcription of the units of utterance in front of me. While the listener was interpreting the utterances, for practical reasons, I marked the utterances using the signs ++h, +h, h, -h or --h according to the degree of intelligibility they should be rated. In cases when the listener misinterpreted an utterance, the misinterpretation which could be a word, a phrase or an entire utterance was written down. In cases when the listener rephrased a certain part of an utterance, the rephrasing was also noted. When the listener was uncertain of a certain word or phrase or guessing from context, this was noted

Accordingly. Some of the listeners' interpretation was recorded. Here are some actual examples from my score sheets with the transcription of the listeners' responses :

(i) List 4, Int. One, Utt.13

'The air here are not so -----'

Response : The a [eI] something. Oh! The air, was it? Yes, the air here is not so -----

Rated : h (fairly intelligible)

(ii) List 4, Int. One, Utt.5

'Er ---- Some ----- there are some places er ----- like the D.R. Park -----'

Response : I think she said there's a place called Deer Park or Beer Park, Deer Park, was it ? I think she said Deer Park, but it could have been a Beer Park.

Rated : - h (partially intelligible)

(iii) List 5, Int. Eight, Utt.17

'Four of us, included me.'

Response : Four of us, including me.

Rated : +h (intelligible)

(iv) List 6, Int. Four, Utt.7

'Er ----- can can said, can be, can said it very known in Malaysia la.'

Response : Can say ? No, I don't understand what he said at all.

Rated : --h (totally unintelligible)

(v) List 6, Int. Six, Utt.23/24

'Er ---- Because if we don't, they don't like the Channel 3. ----- that means they can change to Channel 2 or 1.

Response : Because they don't like the territory they can change to another territory

Rated : -h (partially intelligible)

(vi) List 7, Int. Four, Utt.6

'But Muar is quite famous because Muar they got, they got a bridge ha.'

Response : But Muar is quite famous because they got richer.

Rated : -h (partially intelligible)

(vii) List 7, Int. Five, Utt.4

'And for the first, first July I in charge the Foundation
Science for government.'

Response : I could understand the 'science' but I could not
understand what it was before. Was it Social Science
again or Political Science ? I knew there was a 'Science'
but I couldn't understand the rest of it.

Rated : --h (totally unintelligible)

3.5 Intelligibility Scores

To calculate the score of the degree of intelligibility of a particular subject with a particular listener, the number of utterances at a certain degree of intelligibility out of the total number of units of utterance was expressed as a percentage. Thus, for instance, Subject 1 whose text consisted of 26 units of utterance, conveyed 7 units (26.9%) of utterance totally intelligible (++h) to List.1, 4 units (15.4%) of utterance intelligible (+h), 3 units (11.5%) of utterance fairly intelligible (h), 11 units (42.3%) of utterance partially intelligible (-h), and 1 unit (3.9%) of utterance totally unintelligible (--h) to the same listener. (Table 3.5) As the utterances of each subject were interpreted by seven British and three Malaysian listeners, the mean score of the degree of intelligibility for the British and Malaysian listeners could be calculated. The results of the intelligibility scores (Tables 3.5 to 3.8) will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

Table 3.5 shows a breakdown of the degree of intelligibility each subject scored with each listener. For the purpose of comparison and discussion, the ratings for the British (i.e. List.1 to 7) and the Malaysian listeners (i.e. List. 8 to 10) were kept separate.

Table 3.5 The breakdown of intelligibility scores of each listener with each subject

Interview No	Subject No	Listener No	Total No. of Units of Utt.	No. of Utt. at ++ h	No of Utt at + h	No of Utt at h	No of Utt at - h	No of Utt at -- h
One	1	1	26	7 (26.9%)	4 (15.4%)	3 (11.5%)	11 (42.3%)	1 (3.9%)
One	1	2	26	8 (30.8%)	3 (11.5%)	2 (11.5%)	9 (34.6%)	3 (11.5%)
One	1	3	26	6 (23.1%)	3 (11.5%)	3 (11.5%)	11 (42.3%)	3 (11.5%)
One	1	4	26	8 (30.8%)	4 (15.4%)	1 (3.8%)	10 (38.5%)	3 (11.5%)
One	1	5	26	11 (42.3%)	6 (23.1%)	0 (0%)	6 (23.1%)	3 (11.5%)
One	1	6	26	9 (34.6%)	4 (15.4%)	0 (0%)	9 (34.6%)	4 (15.4%)
One	1	7	26	10 (38.5%)	4 (15.4%)	0 (0%)	8 (30.8%)	4 (15.4%)
Mean Score				8.5 (32.7%)	4 (15.4%)	1.4 (5.4%)	9.1 (35.0%)	3 (11.5%)
One	1	8	26	11 (42.3%)	10 (38.5%)	2 (7.7%)	3 (11.5%)	0 (0%)
One	1	9	26	13 (50.0%)	10 (38.5%)	1 (3.8%)	2 (7.7%)	0 (0%)
One	1	10	26	14 (53.9%)	8 (30.8%)	3 (11.5%)	1 (3.8%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				12.7 (48.8%)	9.3 (35.8%)	2 (7.7%)	2 (7.7%)	0 (0%)
Two	2	1	13	4 (30.7%)	4 (30.7%)	0 (0%)	4 (30.7%)	1 (7.7%)
Two	2	2	13	5 (38.5%)	2 (15.4%)	0 (0%)	6 (46.2%)	0 (0%)
Two	2	3	13	4 (30.7%)	4 (30.7%)	0 (0%)	3 (23.1%)	2 (15.4%)
Two	2	4	13	4 (30.7%)	4 (30.7%)	1 (7.7%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)
Two	2	5	13	4 (30.7%)	3 (23.1%)	0 (0%)	3 (23.1%)	3 (23.1%)
Two	2	6	13	5 (38.5%)	3 (23.1%)	0 (0%)	4 (30.7%)	1 (7.7%)
Two	2	7	13	5 (38.5%)	4 (30.7%)	0 (0%)	2 (15.4%)	2 (15.4%)
Mean Score				4.4 (33.8%)	3.4 (26.2%)	0.2 (1.5%)	3.6 (27.7%)	1.4 (10.8%)
Two	2	8	13	5 (38.5%)	8 (61.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Two	2	9	13	5 (38.5%)	7 (53.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.7%)	0 (0%)
Two	2	10	13	5 (38.5%)	7 (53.8%)	1 (7.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				5 (38.5%)	7.4 (56.9%)	0.3 (2.3%)	0.3 (2.3%)	0 (0%)
Three	3	1	21	7 (33.3%)	2 (9.5%)	0 (0%)	9 (42.9%)	3 (14.3%)
Three	3	2	21	5 (23.8%)	5 (23.8%)	1 (4.8%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (14.3%)
Three	3	3	21	6 (28.5%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)	9 (42.9%)	3 (14.3%)
Three	3	3	21	8 (38.1%)	2 (9.5%)	1 (4.8%)	7 (23.3%)	3 (14.3%)
Three	3	5	21	8 (38.1%)	2 (9.5%)	0 (0%)	6 (28.5%)	5 (23.8%)
Three	3	6	21	8 (38.1%)	2 (9.5%)	0 (0%)	8 (38.1%)	3 (14.3%)
Three	3	7	21	9 (42.9%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0%)	6 (28.5%)	5 (23.8%)
Mean Score				7.3 (34.8%)	2.3 (11.0%)	0.4 (1.9%)	7.4 (35.2%)	3.6 (17.1%)
Three	3	8	21	11 (52.4%)	9 (42.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0%)
Three	3	9	21	12 (57.2%)	8 (38.1%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0%)
Three	3	10	21	13 (61.9%)	8 (38.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				12 (57.2%)	8.3 (39.5%)	0 (0%)	0.7 (3.3%)	0 (0%)

Interview No.	Subject No.	Listener No.	Total No. of Units of Utt.	No of Utt at ++ h	No of Utt at + h	No of Utt at h	No of Utt at - h	No of Utt at -- h
Four	4	1	23	7 (30.4%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)	7 (30.4%)	5 (21.7%)
Four	4	2	23	9 (39.1%)	6 (26.1%)	0 (0%)	7 (30.4%)	1 (4.3%)
Four	4	3	23	8 (34.8%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)	7 (30.4%)	4 (17.4%)
Four	4	4	23	8 (34.8%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (21.7%)	6 (26.1%)
Four	4	5	23	8 (34.8%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (21.7%)	6 (26.1%)
Four	4	6	23	8 (34.8%)	5 (21.7%)	0 (0%)	7 (30.4%)	3 (13.0%)
Four	4	7	23	10 (43.5%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	6 (26.1%)	5 (21.7%)
Mean Score				8.3 (36.1%)	4.1 (17.8%)	0 (0%)	6.3 (27.4%)	4.3 (18.7%)
Four	4	8	23	11 (47.8%)	9 (39.1%)	1 (4.3%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)
Four	4	9	23	10 (43.5%)	12 (52.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)
Four	4	10	23	11 (47.8%)	12 (52.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				10.7 (46.5%)	11 (47.8%)	0.3 (1.3%)	0.7 (3.1%)	0.3 (1.3%)
Five	5	1	14	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)
Five	5	2	14	6 (42.9%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	0 (0%)
Five	5	3	14	5 (35.7%)	5 (35.7%)	0 (0%)	3 (21.3%)	1 (7.1%)
Five	5	4	14	6 (42.9%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)
Five	5	5	14	6 (42.9%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0%)	6 (42.9%)	0 (0%)
Five	5	6	14	6 (42.9%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)
Five	5	7	14	6 (42.9%)	4 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	4 (28.6%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				5.6 (40.0%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	4.7 (33.6%)	0.7 (5.0%)
Five	5	8	14	7 (50.0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0%)
Five	5	9	14	7 (50.0%)	6 (42.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0%)
Five	5	10	14	6 (42.9%)	4 (28.6%)	3 (21.4%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				6.7 (47.9%)	5 (35.7%)	1.3 (9.3%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0%)
Six	6	1	29	11 (37.9%)	10 (34.5%)	0 (0%)	8 (27.6%)	0 (0%)
Six	6	2	29	11 (37.9%)	11 (37.9%)	2 (6.9%)	5 (17.3%)	0 (0%)
Six	6	3	29	11 (37.9%)	11 (37.9%)	0 (0%)	6 (20.7%)	1 (3.5%)
Six	6	4	29	11 (37.9%)	11 (37.9%)	1 (3.5%)	4 (13.8%)	2 (6.9%)
Six	6	5	29	12 (41.4%)	11 (37.9%)	0 (0%)	5 (17.3%)	1 (3.5%)
Six	6	6	29	11 (37.9%)	10 (34.5%)	0 (0%)	7 (24.1%)	1 (3.5%)
Six	6	7	29	11 (37.9%)	12 (41.4%)	0 (0%)	4 (13.8%)	2 (6.9%)
Mean Score				11 (38.2%)	10 (37.6%)	0.4 (1.4%)	5.9 (20.3%)	1 (3.5%)
Six	6	8	29	12 (41.4%)	14 (48.3%)	0 (0%)	3 (10.3%)	0 (0%)
Six	6	9	29	13 (44.8%)	16 (55.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Six	6	10	29	13 (44.8%)	14 (48.3%)	1 (3.5%)	1 (3.5%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				12.7 (43.8%)	14.7 (50.7%)	0.3 (1.0%)	1.3 (4.5%)	0 (0%)

Interview No.	Subject No.	Listener No.	Total No. of Units of Utt.	No. of Utt. at ++ h	No. of Utt. at + h	No of Utt. at h	No of Utt. at - h	No of Utt. at -- h
Seven	7	1	18	5 (27.8%)	6 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	4 (22.2%)	3 (16.6%)
Seven	7	2	18	6 (33.3%)	6 (33.3%)	1 (5.6%)	4 (22.2%)	1 (5.6%)
Seven	7	3	18	5 (27.8%)	6 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	3 (16.6%)	4 (22.2%)
Seven	7	4	18	5 (27.8%)	7 (38.9%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	5 (27.8%)
Seven	7	5	18	5 (27.8%)	7 (38.9%)	0 (0%)	4 (22.2%)	2 (11.1%)
Seven	7	6	18	7 (38.9%)	8 (44.4%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.6%)	2 (11.1%)
Seven	7	7	18	7 (38.9%)	7 (38.9%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.1%)	2 (11.1%)
Mean Score				5.7 (31.7%)	6.7 (37.2%)	0.3 (1.7%)	2.6 (14.4%)	2.7 (15.0%)
Seven	7	8	19	7 (38.9%)	10 (55.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.6%)
Seven	7	9	18	8 (44.4%)	10 (55.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Seven	7	10	18	7 (38.9%)	10 (55.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (5.6%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				7.4 (41.0%)	10 (55.5%)	0 (0%)	0.3 (1.7%)	0.3 (1.7%)
Eight	8	1	23	9 (39.1%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0%)	11 (47.8%)	2 (8.7%)
Eight	8	2	23	16 (69.6%)	3 (13.0%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)
Eight	8	3	23	10 (43.5%)	3 (13.0%)	0 (0%)	9 (39.1%)	1 (4.3%)
Eight	8	4	23	12 (52.2%)	3 (13.0%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	4 (17.4%)
Eight	8	5	23	12 (52.2%)	5 (21.7%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.7%)	4 (17.4%)
Eight	8	6	23	15 (65.2%)	5 (21.7%)	0 (0%)	2 (8.7%)	1 (4.3%)
Eight	8	7	23	13 (56.5%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)	4 (17.4%)	2 (8.7%)
Mean Score				12.4 (53.9%)	3.4 (14.8%)	0 (0%)	5.2 (22.6%)	2 (8.7%)
Eight	8	8	23	19 (82.6%)	4 (17.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Eight	8	9	23	19 (82.6%)	2 (8.7%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Eight	8	10	23	19 (82.6%)	2 (8.7%)	2 (8.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				19 (82.6%)	2.7 (11.7%)	1.3 (5.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Nine	9	1	14	4 (28.6%)	4 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (21.4%)	3 (21.4%)
Nine	9	2	14	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)
Nine	9	3	14	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)
Nine	9	4	14	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	3 (21.4%)	3 (21.4%)
Nine	9	5	14	6 (42.9%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.1%)	4 (28.6%)
Nine	9	6	14	6 (42.9%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (14.3%)	3 (21.4%)
Nine	9	7	14	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (35.7%)	1 (7.1%)
Mean Score				5.2 (37.1%)	3.1 (22.2%)	0 (0%)	3.4 (24.3%)	2.3 (16.4%)
Nine	9	8	14	6 (42.9%)	7 (50.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0%)
Nine	9	9	14	6 (42.9%)	8 (57.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Nine	9	10	14	6 (42.9%)	8 (57.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				6 (42.9%)	7.7 (55.0%)	0 (0%)	0.3 (2.1%)	0 (0%)

Interview No.	Subject No.	Listener No.	Total No. of Units of Utt	No. of Utt. at ++ h	No. of Utt. at + h	No. of Utt. at h	No. of Utt. at - h	No. of Utt. at -- h
Ten	10	1	44	14 (31.8%)	11 (25.0%)	0 (0%)	18 (40.9%)	1 (2.3%)
Ten	10	2	44	16 (36.4%)	13 (29.5%)	2 (4.5%)	12 (27.3%)	1 (2.3%)
Ten	10	3	44	15 (34.1%)	12 (27.3%)	1 (2.3%)	12 (27.3%)	4 (9.1%)
Ten	10	4	44	16 (36.4%)	8 (18.2%)	1 (2.3%)	18 (40.9%)	1 (2.3%)
Ten	10	5	44	19 (43.2%)	13 (29.5%)	0 (0%)	9 (20.5%)	3 (6.8%)
Ten	10	6	44	17 (38.6%)	13 (29.5%)	0 (0%)	12 (27.3%)	2 (4.5%)
Ten	10	7	44	16 (36.4%)	11 (25.0%)	0 (0%)	12 (27.3%)	5 (11.3%)
Mean Score				16.1 (36.6%)	11.6 (26.4%)	0.6 (1.4%)	13.3 (30.2%)	2.4 (5.4%)
Ten	10	8	44	23 (52.2%)	19 (43.2%)	0 (0%)	2 (4.5%)	0 (0%)
Ten	10	9	44	23 (52.2%)	19 (43.2%)	1 (2.3%)	1 (2.3%)	0 (0%)
Ten	10	10	44	23 (52.2%)	19 (43.2%)	1 (2.3%)	1 (2.3%)	0 (0%)
Mean Score				23 (52.2%)	19 (43.2%)	0.7 (1.6%)	1.3 (3.0%)	0 (0%)

Table 3.6 Mean Scores of Utterances rated ++h, +h, h, -h and --h

[illegible]

Table 3.7 Mean Scores of Utterances rated at the 5 degrees of intelligibility (each ethnic group)

British listeners	Utt. rated ++h	Utt. rated +h	Utt. rated h	Utt. rated -h	Utt. rated --h
Chinese subjects	34.9%	18.5%	1.8%	29.9%	14.9%
Malay subjects	36.1%	28.3%	1.0%	26.1%	8.4%
Indian subjects	46.0%	26.1%	0.6%	21.3%	6.0%
Malaysian listeners	++h	+h	h	-h	--h
Chinese subjects	46.8%	47.0%	2.3%	3.7%	0.2%
Malay subjects	47.1%	44.8%	3.6%	3.9%	0.6%
Indian subjects	63.2%	31.2%	3.3%	2.3%	0%

Table 3.8 Mean Scores of Utterances rated at the 5 degrees of intelligibility (all subjects)

British listeners	Utt. rated ++h	Utt. rated +h	Utt. rated h	Utt. rated -h	Utt. rated --h
All subjects	37.6%	23.4%	1.5%	27.2%	10.3%
Malaysian listeners	++h	+h	h	-h	--h
All subjects	51.1%	42.2%	2.8%	3.6%	0.3%

3.6 Analysis of the Main Corpus : an Overview

In Chapters Four and Five, intelligibility problems will be analyzed in the light of the linguistic errors of the subjects' speech, which will be presented at these levels, i.e. At the segmental and suprasegmental levels in Chapter Four; at the lexical and syntactic levels in Chapter Five.

In Chapter Four, in order to analyze the subjects' utterances at the segmental and suprasegmental levels, some parts of the transcription of the main corpus will be further transcribed in phonetic transcription. Separate errors made by the three ethnic groups in vowels, consonants, clusters etc., and their frequency will be listed. Phonetic error types will be classified and the types of phonetic errors that hamper and do not hamper intelligibility for British listeners will be examined by correlating them with the degree of intelligibility rated in terms of segmental errors. Hypotheses on the correlation between phonological /contextual factors and the intelligibility of mispronounced words will then be established.

Phonological errors such as stress, intonation and tone grouping made by the three ethnic groups will be discussed. The types of phonological errors that hamper and do not hamper intelligibility for British listeners will be looked into, by correlating them with the degree of intelligibility rated in terms of phonological errors in some of the utterances.

In Chapter Five, separate lexical and syntactic errors committed by the three ethnic groups and their frequency will be listed. Syntactic and lexical error types will be classified and the types of lexical and syntactic errors that affect and do not affect intelligibility for British listeners will be studied by correlating them with the degree of intelligibility in terms of lexical and syntactic errors in the utterances. Hypotheses on what kind of lexical and syntactic errors may hinder intelligibility most will then be established.

In Chapter Six, intelligibility problems will be analyzed in the light of nonlinguistic factors at the discourse level Lack of shared

background knowledge and lack of coherence in utterances are some of the nonlinguistic factors taken into account. The British listeners' comments and judgements on some utterances will be used to support my argument about whether certain nonlinguistic factors facilitate or impair intelligibility.

In Chapter Seven, each utterance rated -h and --h in the main corpus will be examined as a whole to determine the likely cause of intelligibility problems ie whether it occurs at the segmental, suprasegmental, lexical, syntactic or discourse level. This was done by eliminating the factors that do not obviously interfere with intelligibility in the utterances rated +h and ++h.

3.7 The Nature of the Main Corpus

3.7.1 Some Terminology Used in the Main Corpus

For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to comment on some terms used in the description and analysis of the main corpus.

(i) Oral Interview

In this study, an oral interview is a face-to-face interactional stretch of talk between three participants, viz two interviewers (instructors of English : one of them was the main interviewer) and one interviewee (student), which took place in a formal setting. It consists of a series of exchanges (See S.3.7.2.3) made up of questions and answers (on substantially the same topics) with the interviewers eliciting information from the interviewee for the purpose of evaluation and the interviewee providing information for the interviewers in order to be evaluated. The aim of the spoken interaction is to assess the interviewee's spoken English.

(ii) Utterance/Sentence

A sentence is usually referred to the largest structural unit in terms of which the grammar of a language is organized. An utterance is usually referred to a stretch of speech about which no assumptions have been made in terms of linguistic theory. In other words, a sentence can be defined in terms of the internal relationships which hold between its constituent parts: it is a unit of linguistic description. An utterance, on the other hand, can be defined in terms of its external relationships with

nonlinguistic items : it is a unit for the description of behaviour.
(See also (iii) below)

In describing the distinctive features as between spoken and written language, Brown and Yule (1983 (b) : 15) claim that spoken language is 'less richly organised than written language, containing less densely packed information, but containing more interactive markers and planning "fillers" ', and conclude that the features typical of written language should be considered as characteristics of sentences whereas the features typical of spoken language should be considered as characteristics of utterances. In other words, 'utterances are spoken and sentences are written'.

Though the two terms 'utterance' and 'sentence' are often used interchangeably, I suggest that the distinction should be kept. In this study, an utterance can be defined as any continuous stretch of speech in the oral interviews which is isolated for the purpose of analysis. It can be of any length, ranging from a one-word question or answer to a number of phrases or clauses etc., which constitute a complete or incomplete sentence. Since both linguistic and nonlinguistic elements of the oral interviews are analysed, the term 'sentence' is only used when grammatical functions of the utterances are taken into consideration.

(iii) Discourse/Text

The term 'discourse' is sometimes used to refer to any stretch of language (written or spoken) larger than a sentence and this stretch of language or sentences in combination is linked by semantic cohesion which is realised grammatically or lexically. In this sense, the term seems to be used interchangeably with the term 'text'. For instance, Halliday and Hasan (1976:4) posit that cohesive relationship within a text are established 'where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another'. Harris (1952:357) feels that the 'formal features of the discourse can be studied by distributional methods within the text'.

'Discourse' is also used in a wider sense by linguists such as Widdowson (1978,1979), Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Edmondson (1981) and Gumperz (1979, 1982) who analyze the communicative function of language. In this sense, it is used to refer to the entity consisting of the text (verbal and non-verbal elements) and

of the circumstances in which the text is produced and interpreted, with special reference to who the speaker is, whom he is addressing, what his communicative goal is etc. The object of analysis is the text in situation. In Widdowson's words, (1984:100) 'Discourse is a communicative process by means of interaction. Its situational outcome is a change in a state of affairs : information is conveyed, intentions made clear. Its linguistic product is text. This can be studied in dissociation from its source as a manifestation of linguistic rules, that is to say as a compendium of sentences'. Besides keeping the terms 'discourse' and 'text' terminologically distinct, Widdowson also makes distinctions between the terms 'utterance' and 'sentence', as he puts it : (1979:116)

Discourse consists of utterances, with which sentences can be put into correspondence, and these combine in complex ways to relate to extra-linguistic reality to achieve a communicative effect. The decontextualization of language data yields the isolated sentence whose meaning is self-contained.

Coulthard (1977:9) supports Widdowson's idea in using these four terms to distinguish description of decontextualised data from those of contextualised data:

In decontextualised data, sentences combine to form texts while in contextualised data, utterances combine to form discourse.

Moreover, while linguistic markers play an important role in constituting a text, linguistic or non-linguistic behaviours play a key role in creating discourse, as Edmonson (1981:4) puts it, 'A text is a structured sequence of linguistic expressions forming a unitary whole, and a discourse a structured event manifest in linguistic (or other) behaviour'.

I propose to retain the text-discourse distinction and adopt Widdowson's concept of discourse in analyzing the communicative function of the language used in the oral interviews. (See also (V) below).

(IV) Context

The term 'context' has been understood in various ways. In linguistics and phonetics, it is usually used to refer to 'specific parts of an utterance (or text) near or adjacent to a unit which is the focus of attention. The occurrence of a unit (eg a sound, word) is partly or wholly determined by its context, which is specified in terms of the

units' relations, ie the other features with which it combines as a sequence'. (Crystal 1980:87). In the widest sense, the term 'situational context' includes the 'total non-linguistic background to a text or utterance, including the immediate situation in which it is used, and the awareness by speaker and hearer of what has been said earlier and of any relevant external beliefs or presuppositions'. (Crystal 1980:87) Leech (1983:13), however, restricts his concept of context to a particular social setting only, ie it refers to 'any background knowledge assumed to be shared by speaker and hearer and which constitutes to hearer's interpretation of what speaker means by a given utterance'.

In this study, 'context' refers to both the linguistic and non-linguistic environment in which utterances occur as defined by Crystal.

(V) Discourse Analysis

For the last fifteen years or so, discourse analysis has developed rapidly. Theoretically speaking, it stems from Austin's (1962) speech act theory which was later developed and modified by Searle (1969). Austin analyzes the role of utterances in relation to the behaviour of speaker and listener in interpersonal communication. For instance, certain utterances appear to be statements, when in fact they are performing an action. His speech act is not an 'act of speech' but rather a communicative activity, defined with reference to the three acts that a speaker may perform within an utterance, viz (i) the locutionary act ie an act of making a meaningful utterance; (ii) the illocutionary act ie an act which is performed by the speaker by virtue of this intention or purpose eg promising, requesting, commanding, baptising; (iii) the perlocutionary act ie an act which is performed when an utterance achieves a particular effect on the behaviour, beliefs, feelings etc of a listener. eg utterances which insult, frighten, sympathize, persuade etc. Much of Austin's work was devoted to the distinction between the first and second types of act. Searle (1969) modified Austin's speech act theory by neglecting the distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts and emphasizing the notion of proposition as he pointed out that all utterances perform illocutionary acts as well as any referential act they may make. He, thus, makes a distinction between the 'sentence' and the 'act' it is used to perform. This distinction between the sentence and the force of the utterance forms the basis for the analysis of interaction and discourse. The study of language has,

thus, become a part of the study of action or behaviour. In other words, the focus has shifted from the study of form to the study of the role of formal features in speech acts.

Since the work of Austin and Searle, discourse analysis has developed in many directions and the Table below shows some areas which are relevant to this study.

Table 3.9 Areas of discourse analysis and their relevance to this study

Area of study	Work done by	Relevance to this study
Philosophical aspect of discourse	Austin, Searle	Theoretical base
Cohesion in text/discourse	Halliday, Hasan	Intelligibility and linguistic structure beyond the sentence level
Coherence in text/discourse	Widdowson	Intelligibility and non-linguistic structure beyond the sentence level
Discourse Strategies	Gumperz, Widdowson	Intelligibility and social-cultural elements in the main corpus; interpretative procedures for discourse processing
Cross-Cultural discourse strategies	Gumperz, Thomas, Richards etc	NS - NNS communication; Intelligibility and cross-cultural linguistic and non-linguistic differences
Discourse Interaction	Sinclair, Coulthard	Discourse structure of the main corpus

(Vi) Cohesion in Text/Discourse

For Halliday and Hasan (1976:2) the primary criterion for determining whether a set of sentences do or do not constitute a text depends on the cohesive relationships within and between the sentences, which create texture: 'A text has texture and this is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text'. Moreover, cohesive relationships within a text are established 'where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it'. In other words, texture is the

sum of the features of a text, which makes it a text and not a random sequence of sentences. For instance, the following two sentences,

Wash and core six cooking apples. Put them into a fire-proof dish. (p2)

constitute a text because 'them' in the second sentence refers back (or is anaphoric) to the 'six cooking apples' in the first sentence. This anaphoric function of 'them' provides cohesion to the two sentences so that they can be interpreted as a whole : the word 'them' presupposes for its interpretation something other than itself and, in this instance, the 'six cooking apples' and the presupposition provides cohesion between the two sentences, creating text.

Halliday and Hasan (1976:7) also point out that any unit of any length which is structured 'hangs together to form text'. For instance, all grammatical units - sentences, clauses, groups, words etc are 'internally "cohesive" simply because they are structured'. However, since most texts extend beyond a single sentence, cohesion within a text depends on something other than the structure. In other words, cohesion is the semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element rather than grammatical relation.

Halliday and Hasan outline six types of cohesive links which can be established within a text, viz reference, substitution, ellipses, lexical relationship and conjunction. It is deemed unnecessary to review the cohesive links here as they are so well-known. (See also Chapter Six, S.6.6.5)

(7) Coherence in Text/Discourse

Widdowson (1978:28) uses the term 'coherence' to refer to 'well-formed' text or discourse and points out that cohesion is, however, neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for coherence. He further distinguishes the concept of 'cohesion' from 'coherence' in discourse by stating that cohesion is the 'overt relationship between propositions expressed though sentences, ie by establishing a propositional relationship across sentences', without regard to what illocutionary acts are being performed, by reference to formal syntactic and semantic signals. For instance, in the following exchange,

A: Can you go to Edinburgh tomorrow?

B: Yes, I can.

(1979:96)

the proposition expressed by A (ie what he wants to know) is linked up with that expressed by B (ie information given) to form a continuous propositional development. Thus, the utterances are 'contextually appropriate' and the exchange is cohesive. Moreover, the propositional relationship is established by means of formal

(ie syntactic and semantic) links between the utterances and in this instance, by means of 'ellipsis' and repetition of the same item 'can' in B's utterance.

On the other hand, 'coherence' in discourse is perceived when it makes sense even without cohesive links. For instance,

A: Can you go to Edinburgh tomorrow?

B: B.E.A. pilots are on strike. (1979:96)

Though there are no cohesive links in this exchange, the two utterances in combination make sense and the exchange is, therefore, coherent. As Widdowson puts it, 'We understand that B is saying that he cannot go to Edinburgh because the strike rules out what he considers to be the only reasonable means of getting there'.

Furthermore, Widdowson (1978:29) claims that a discourse 'makes sense' when we 'recognise that there is a relationship between the illocutionary acts which propositions, not always overtly linked, are being used to perform'. In other words, utterances which are apparently not cohesive may be interpreted when a reason is being expressed for an action being performed in speaking. To illustrate this, Widdowson presents this example:

A: That's the telephone.

B: I'm in the bath. (1978:29)

A: Ok.

Widdowson suggests that the conversational exchange makes sense or constitutes a coherent discourse as we can 'establish a relationship between the three utterances as illocutionary acts', ie the action performed by each utterance and, thus, supply the covert 'missing propositional links': (P29)

A: That's the telephone (Can you answer it, please?)
(Here A requests B to perform action)

B: (No, I can't answer it because) I'm in the bath.
(Here B gives excuse for not being able to comply with A's request)

A: Ok (I'll answer it)

(A undertakes to perform action himself)

Hence, a distinction exists between cohesion and coherence in text or discourse. Cohesion is internal to the text or discourse. It refers to the relationship within the text or discourse which occurs when the understanding of one linguistic element is possible only by reference to another in the text or discourse. On the other hand,

coherence is external to the text or discourse. It refers to the relationship within the text or discourse which occurs when the understanding of the text or discourse is perceived by means of some non-linguistic elements such as shared knowledge between the speaker and listener or knowledge of the world.

Whether lack of cohesion (or cohesive error) and coherence in utterances in the main corpus affects intelligibility or not will be dealt with in Chapter Six. (See Chapter Six, S.6.6.5; 6.6.6)

3.7.2 Discourse Structure of the Oral Interviews

3.7.2.1 Verbal and Non-verbal Behaviours in the Oral Interviews

It is apparent that in a spoken discourse, verbal behaviour between the participants, which can be interpreted in the light of phonology, lexis and syntax, is not the only relevant activity in the structure of the spoken discourse as speakers usually do other things simultaneously when they are talking. There are occasions when non-verbal behaviour is a result of a request for that non-verbal behaviour.

eg In Interview Nine in the Main Corpus:

I (Interviewer) : Can I see your form?

S (Student) : (Silent) - non-verbal response (presumably handing over the form to the interviewer).

I : Thank you. Your name is Chua Teck Yong.
You're from Muar.

S : Ya.

It is evident that in interpreting this part of the interview, we assume that the form changed hands. Otherwise, the verbal activity alone is probably not adequate to interpret it. Here, the non-verbal activity is clearly more central to the ongoing interaction than the verbal. Edmondson (1981:37) points out that verbal and non-verbal acts may be linked in a conversational sequence 'via the notion of performance or execution'. In this instance, the execution of the request is performed via non-verbal interaction ie the handing over of the form. Hence, any activity (verbal or non-verbal) may form a structural element in an ongoing spoken interaction.

3.7.2.2 Oral Interview versus Casual/Informal Conversation

Both oral interview and casual conversation are a kind of spoken interaction between two or more than two participants. They, however, differ from each other in the following ways:

- (i) Unlike casual conversation which is not normally prearranged, an oral interview is a formal speech event that is prearranged.

This presupposes that the purpose of the interaction is known to the participants and that the results of the interaction will be used to 'settle future decisions about an issue known prior to the commencement of the talk'. (Silverman 1973:39). In this study, the results of the interview was used to stream interviewees (ie students) into the appropriate levels of the Spoken English courses.

(ii) In casual conversation, changes of topics are unpredictable. This is so because participants are of equal status and they have equal rights to determine the topic for conversation. Thus, while one speaker can usually control the direction of the discourse as long as he is talking, a next speaker who is not interested in the topic can divert the topic to something else; and occasionally, can even interrupt the current speaker. Any participant may choose to remain passive or avoid answering questions. On the other hand, in oral interviews, the interviewer who assumes rights over the interviewee, controls the organizational structure of the talk in the sense that he has the right to begin the talk, introduce new topics or terminate the talk. Moreover, he has the right to ask questions designed to elicit information by which the interviewee is assessed. The interviewee has to play an active role in answering the 'interviewer's questions, giving information, and has no right to ask questions except for clarification. eg Interview Nine

I : You live in Muar all your life?

S : What is it?

I : Have you lived in Muar all your life?

S : Ya.

(iii) As in casual conversation, the participants in oral interviews take turns to speak and this speaker-listener role change alternates during the course of the interaction, with little overlapping speech and few silences. In conversation, no fully overt rules in turn-taking seem to exist though Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1978:13) propose this system for the organization of turn-taking in conversation:

For any turn,

1. At initial turn-constructive unit's initial transition-relevance place:

a) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, then the party so selected has rights, and is obliged, to take next turn to speak, and no others have such rights or obligations, transfer occurring at that place.

b) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, self-selection for next speakership may, but need not, be instituted, with first starter acquiring rights to a turn, transfer occurring at that place.

c) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, then current speaker may, but need not, continue, unless another self-selects.

2. If, at initial turn-constructional unit's initial transition-relevance place, neither 1 (a) nor (b) has operated, and, following the provision of 1 (c), current speaker has continued, then the Rule-set (a) - (c) reapplies at next transition - relevance place, and recursively at each next transition - relevance place, until transfer is effected.

For the analysis of actual conversation, these rules cannot be applied to all the instances as turn-taking in an ongoing conversation is usually not predictable in the sense that speaker change may happen at any time. Even Sacks et al admit such constraints:

'Speaker change overwhelmingly recurs..... Speaker change occurrence is a special case of speaker change recurrence, being a restriction too complicated to be dealt with here.' (P15), and 'turns' are 'partially organized via language-specific constructional formats...' (P46) and, thus, 'perhaps nearly all, of the parameters that conversation allows to vary'. (P47).

Turn-taking in an oral interview is, however, largely determined by the interviewer who plays a *privileged* role in controlling turn-assignment at the conventionally determined transition points. Thus, there are more definite principles regulating the taking of turns, and this special convention constitutes relatively recognizable exchanges: Question-and-answer sequence exchanges.

There are some fixed patterns of question-and-answer sequence exchanges in the oral interviews. Some examples are:

a) For straightforward questions, the Q-and-A sequence exchange is simply

I : Q (Question)

S : A (Answer)

eg Interview One

I : Have you been to Penang before?

S : Yes.

- (b) When the interviewee lacks the ability to go beyond the surface meaning of a question, he may seek clarification and the Q-and-A sequence exchange is:

I : Q
 S : Q
 I : C (Comment)
 S : A

eg Interview Two

I : What about library facilities? Are they good?
 S : Sir, you mean service?
 I : Mhm. Services.
 S : Very good.

- (c) In cases where the interviewee fails to hear or understand the question to the interview question and the Q-and-A sequence exchange is:

I : Q
 S : Q
 I : C/Q
 S : A

eg Interview Eight

I : Any other programmes in TV3 that you have enjoyed?
 S : What?
 I : TV3 doesn't have much sports programmes, but are there any other programmes that you enjoy?
 S : TV programmes like Dynasty.....

- (d) For more indirect questions which seek the interviewee's opinions, some comment or clarification is usually given before a question is imposed. And in cases where no response is obtained, the interviewer may even rephrase the question in such a way that it establishes the focus of response he intends to obtain. The Q-and-A sequence exchange is thus:

I : C/Q
 S : (no response)
 I : C/Q
 S : A

eg Interview Eight

I : Some group has just said that TV3 is not very good, shouldn't be shown. What do you think about that?
 What is your opinion?

S : (Silent)

I : Some groups in the country have expressed dissatisfaction with TV3. What do you think about that?

S : I think that the TV3 programmes are really interesting
.....

- (e) In some instances, the interviewer may support the interviewee's answer by commenting on it, and when this happens, the interviewee usually reinforces it by restating what the interviewer has said. The Q-and-A sequence exchange is:

I : Q

S : A

I : C

S : R (reinforce)

eg Interview Ten

I : Can you tell me something specific?

S : And about the..... the traffic in K.L. also jam, and when you go to work you have to wake up early in the morning whereas compared to Kedah at 8, you can, or 7.30 you are still at home.

I : Life is a bit slower.

S : A bit slower in Kedah if compared to K.L.

- (iv) As Sacks et al (1978) and Johnson (1980) point out, the questions in casual conversation serve as a means to secure and organize information, to define topics and achieve conversational co-operation among the participants. They also serve to secure, allocate or exit a turn, or to begin or end a topic or entire conversation. On the other hand, questions in oral interviews serve as a means to elicit information, to elicit a response that will be assessed, to constitute the focus of a conversation topic and also as an expression of authority. Because of this assessment orientated nature of interview questions, the following techniques in asking questions are not normally used in casual conversation:

- (a) Interview questions are sometimes indirect and this demands the interviewee's ability to infer the types of answer required.

eg Interview Ten

I : What about morally? The moral question if you legalize prostitution?

- (b) There may be an increasing complexity of syntactic construction in the interview questions during the course of interview. For instance, in the beginning of Interview Ten, the questions were straightforward and short: eg

I: How long have you been in K.L?

Towards the end of the interview, the level of difficulty of questions increased when the interviewers found out that the interviewee was able to cope with more difficult questions. eg

I: Do you think one way to solve this problem is to legalize prostitution like they do in the Western countries?.....

The Q-and-A sequence structure of oral interviews facilitates intelligibility between the participants of the interviews because negotiation of meaning is possible. eg

I: Foundation Science?

S: Ya.

I: What is that actually?

S: Something like 'matrikulasi'

I: Mhm. (See also Chapter Six, S.6.1.2)

Moreover, mishearing or misinterpretation between participants can be repaired. eg

Interview Five

I: So you have been working for USM for seven years now.

S: No, no. Three years.

The Q-and-A sequence structure of oral interviews however may not facilitate intelligibility for non-participants of the interviews, in particular, when the non-participants do not share the linguistic or sociocultural knowledge of the participants. (For details, see Chapter Six, S.6.6.1; 6.6.6)

3.7.2.3 Application of Sinclair and Coulthard's System of Analysis

Like classroom interaction, oral interviews are highly structured. To some extent, the system of classroom discourse analysis devised by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) can be applied to the analysis of the oral interviews in the main corpus. The four rank scale, ie act, move, exchange and transaction used by Sinclair and Coulthard (P.19-59) can be applied to the organization of the oral interviews.

For instance, the discourse structure of Interview Two in the main corpus can be tabulated as follows:

Class of Move	Utterance	Class of Act		
I Initiating	What sort of things do you like about the campus? What sort of things do you enjoy?	Elicitation	exchange (1)	Transaction (1)
S Responding	Oh, I think and study much in library la, and for the games er a bit only la.	Reply		
I Initiating	What about library facilities? Are they good?	Elicitation	exchange (2)	
S Responding	Sir, you mean service?	Reply		
I Follow-up	Mhm, services.	Acknowledge/Comment		
S Responding	Very good.	Reply		
I Initiating	What about the staff? Are they helpful?	Elicitation		
S Responding	Yes, very helpful.	Reply		
I Follow-up	Mhm. Very helpful.	Acknowledge/Comment	exchange (3)	
I Initiating	Can you always find the book that you need?	Elicitation		
S Responding	Sometime very difficult la because some books ah got fews only. Two or three books and er.....if..... because many students need this book ah, so difficult to find la.	Reply	exchange (4)	
I Follow-up	Mhm. I see,	Acknowledge/Comment		
I Initiating	You don't play many sports?	Elicitation		Transaction (2)
S Responding	Er..... what?	Reply		
I Follow-up	You don't play many sports in USM? You play anything.....er badminton or tennis?	Clue	exchange (5)	
S Responding	Sport ah..... No.	Reply		
I Follow-up	Nothing.	Comment		
I Initiating	So what do you do for your free time, your leisure time?	Elicitation		
S Responding	So..... the most time I am in library because I find the English book very difficult I cannot study la I must find the.....er.....dictionary... a long time.	Reply	exchange (6)	Transaction (3)
I Initating	Do you watch much TV?	Elicitation		
S Responding	Er...I think...Mon..Monday la. sport, sport I watch it... football and er... some, some badminton.	Reply	exchange (7)	
F Follow-up	But normally you don't watch very much,	Comment		
S Responding	No,	Reply		
I Follow-up	I see,	Acknowledge		

Sinclair and Coulthard's model of analysis will not be used to analyse the utterances in the main corpus. The reasons are:

- (i) It is purely a system for analyzing the structure of discourse in classroom situations.
- (ii) It does not contribute to the study of the intelligibility of discourse which is the main aim of the present study, but to its structure.

However, the concepts used in Sinclair and Coulthard's analysis, eg elicitation, reply, comment, exchange etc are relevant to aspects of the structure of the discourse in this study and will thus be used in the analysis.

Having examined the data for measuring the intelligibility of ME and discussed the research procedure used, I shall move on to analyze intelligibility problems in the light of linguistic errors of the subjects' speech. In the next chapter, I shall discuss specifically the effects of phonological errors on intelligibility.

NOTES

- (1) (i) For details of the examination, see Chapter One, S.1.3.2
- (ii) The grading system of the examinations is as follows:
 A1, A2 (Distinction); C3, C4, C5, C6 (Credit); P7, P8
 (Passed); F9 (Failed);
- (iii) The Syllabus of SPM 121 examination paper is based on
 the old MCE structural syllabuses whereas SPM122 exami-
 nation paper is based on the new SPM communicative sy-
 llabus;
- (iv) Four levels of General English courses are being offered
 at the Language Centre for students from the Schools of
 Arts in the University. Grades given:
 A, B, C, D, and F (Failed);
- (v) students at the University normally graduate after four
 years.
- (2) Students who were found to be very competent in spoken English
 were not allowed to take the Spoken English courses.
- (3) Part of an utterance, eg a phrase or a clause, which makes
 sense, ie conveys meaning.

CHAPTER FOURINTELLIGIBILITY AND ERRORS AT THE PHONOLOGICAL LEVEL

It is definitely true that for an utterance to be understood, perfect pronunciation is not necessary and equally true that it is not necessarily the case that if each speech sound is perfectly produced the speaker will be understood. The reason is that an utterance always provides more clues than required and these clues are usually called 'redundancy'. Gimson (1970:3), for instance, points out that 'a speaker will, in almost any utterance, provide the listener with far more cues than he needs for easy comprehension.' However, to what extent this kind of redundancy can help to ascertain the intelligibility of speech is yet to be examined in greater detail, in particular, when a listener is listening to a nonnative variety of a language. Very few studies have been done on the gravity of different types of phonological error in relation intelligibility and a couple of experiments concerning segmental errors that have been carried out are limited to analyzing words in isolation or connected speech in terms of utterances in isolation but not in the context of, say, a conversation. (see S.4.1)

In the first half of this Chapter, some features of the segmental errors produced by the subjects in the main corpus will be analyzed. Based on the interpretation of the British listeners the types of segmental errors that usually hamper and do not hamper intelligibility can be identified and, thus, a hierarchy of error gravity at the segmental level can be established. Likewise, in the second half of the Chapter, features of the suprasegmental errors produced by the subjects will be analyzed and the types of suprasegmental errors that may affect intelligibility can be identified.

4.1 Segmental Errors and Intelligibility

(i) Vowel/Consonant Errors and Intelligibility

It is generally claimed that there is a difference in intelligibility between vowel and consonant errors and that consonant errors are often judged as more serious than vowel errors. Gimson (1970:4), for instance, asserts that 'we can replace our twenty English vowels by the single vowel [ə] in any utterance and still, if the rhythmic

pattern is kept, retain a high degree of intelligibility.' A similar replacement with a certain consonant sound would definitely make most utterances unintelligible.

Hick's (1982:158) investigation on the intelligibility of Tanzanian English also reveals that 'the vowel errors have little or no relationship to intelligibility provided the errors are consistent and therefore predictable.'

Ladefoged (1976) posits that like L2 speakers, L1 speakers, too, vary widely in their vowel quality. However, their speech can still be interpreted without difficulty if they are consistent in their vowel quality.

Norrish (1983:54) goes along with the same widely accepted judgement by pointing out that 'experiments filtering out vowel qualities have shown that the message is still clear enough to be understood. But when consonants disappear, the message can barely be interpreted.' (See also S.4.3.5 and Chapter Seven, S.7.4.4.1)

(ii) Phonemic/Subphonemic Errors and Intelligibility

It is generally believed that consistent replacement of a certain phoneme in speech does not give rise to intelligibility problems. Mackey (1970:201), for instance, expresses the view that predictability of consistent replacement of allophones in a nonnative speaker's speech constitutes no barrier to intelligibility:

When getting the hang of a foreign accent, the strange sound which consistently replaces a certain allophone in the stream of speech does not on each recurrence add much new information to the message. We come to expect it, and take it for granted, for it can be predicted. In other words, the more predictable the interference, the less it interferes.

It is also argued that errors involving the substitution of one phoneme for another are more serious than subphonemic errors since phonemic errors are likely to cause misunderstanding but subphonemic errors will only give rise to a deviant accent without affecting intelligibility. Johansson's (1978) investigation proves that this is not always the case. He asserts that the difference in acceptability between the types of phonemic errors is far from consistent. For instance, the substitution of [æ] for [e] in 'Ted'

received an extremely high intelligibility score, [o] for [ou] in 'go' received an intermediate intelligibility score and [d] for [ð] in 'they' received higher ratings than might have been expected. Moreover, the substitution of [t] for [θ] in 'something' received a lower rating than 'England' pronounced with a close [i] and 'else' pronounced with a clear [l]. It was also found that certain subphonemic errors received lower ratings than phonemic errors. For example, the realization of the initial consonant in 'write' as [R] and the use of [æ u] in 'boat' received some-what lower ratings than the phonemic errors mentioned. (See also S.4.3.8 and 4.3.9)

(iii) Mispronunciation of Words, Context and Intelligibility

Context is always part of a situation in communication through which speech takes place. Hence, when a word in an utterance is mispronounced, there may be contextual clues in the utterance which enable the listener to interpret it. Tench (1981:18) cites this example :

..... by referring to the context, the mispronunciation in the word "dog" as "dock" in the utterance "I'm going to take the dock for a walk" can be correctly interpreted as we can only take animate beings for a walk and because we are aware of the habit of many people who do take dogs for walks.

Ladefoged (1967:144) also claims that in interpreting an utterance, the listener usually identified the sounds that he hears not simply as a result of considering them as sounds, but also as a result of expecting them to be some of the particular set of noises that are likely to make sense in that particular context. He cites this example :

If a listener hears the words "Two and two make.....," he need not hear any of the sounds of the last words in order to make a reasonable guess as to what it might be.

(See also S.4.4 and Chapter Six, S.6.6)

4.2 Criteria for Assessing Segmental Errors and their Correlation with Intelligibility

4.2.1 Definition of Segmental Errors

By segmental 'error', I refer to any deviant pronunciation from standard British English or R.P. (1). This includes vowel and

consonant errors, consonant cluster errors, elision of a phoneme or a syllable or errors in syllabic phonemes like [l] and [n]. Gimson's (1970) phonetic symbols were used to transcribe the subjects' pronunciation. Appendix C(2) provides the symbols used to transcribe subjects' mispronunciation not used in Gimson's system eg the nearest symbols used in the Cardinal Vowel system devised by Daniel Jones (1956) were used to transcribe the subjects' vowel errors, with the convention of the IPA. (See App. C(1) and C(2))

4.2.2 Grouping of Segmental Errors

All segmental errors produced by the three ethnic groups in the oral interviews were listed in separate Tables so as to ascertain whether certain error types were characteristics of certain native language backgrounds only. As far as possible, the same words and similar phonemic errors were grouped together, and monosyllabic, disyllabic and polysyllabic words were listed separately. Correctly produced words were not listed. (Appendix D(1), D(2), D(3)).

4.2.3 Classification of Segmental Error Types

Some twenty five types of segmental errors could be identified. However, for the convenience of analysis and scoring, they were grouped into eight categories: Error types a and b were concerned with vowel errors (including pure vowels and diphthongs); Error types c and d were concerned with consonant errors (including consonants and consonant clusters); Error types e to g were concerned with omission or elision of a phoneme or a syllable; and Error type h was concerned with errors related to aspiration. (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1 Classification of segmental error types

Error Type	Category
a	Replacement of one vowel phoneme with another (pure vowel or diphthong)
b	Monophthongization of diphthongs
c	Replacement of one consonant phoneme with another
d	Reduction of consonant clusters in final positions
e	Elision of a phoneme (vowel or consonant)
f	Elision of a syllable
g	Errors in syllabic phonemes, e.g. [l] and [n]
h	Unaspirated voiceless plosives in initial positions

It should be pointed out that the following deviant pronunciation was not included in the error count :

- (i) the replacement of [I] with [i] in all word positions;
- (ii) unreleased plosives in all final positions;
- (iii) the replacement of plural morphemes [z] and [Iz] with [s] and [ðs];
- (iv) the omission of [t] or [d] for regular past tense, past participle or adjectives.

These errors were excluded on the grounds that they are now 'standard' feature of ME (both the First and Second Variety) and were found not to interfere with intelligibility.

4.2.4 Degrees of Intelligibility

The principle used to devise the five-point intelligibility rating scale in Chapter Three was applied to rate the segmental errors : However, as correctly produced words were not included, only four degrees were identified and only the British listeners' interpretation was taken into consideration :

Table 4.2 Intelligibility rating scale for segmental errors

Degree	Specification of degree of Intelligibility	Sign used in scoring	Including
1	intelligible	+h	words which were wrongly produced but correctly heard by British listeners.
2	fairly intelligible	h	words which were wrongly produced but were correctly guessed by British listeners.
3	partially intelligible	-h	words which were wrongly produced and wrongly heard by British listeners.
4	totally unintelligible	--h	words which were wrongly produced and could not be interpreted by British listeners.

4.2.5 Information Included in Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3)

The following information was included in Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3) :

- (i) list of mispronounced words grouped according to the criteria mentioned in S.4.2.2;
- (ii) transcription of the words listed in (i) in RP.;
- (iii) transcription of the mispronounced words;
- (iv) error types of the mispronounced words, according to the classification in Table 4.1;
- (v) number of occurrences of the error types in the oral interviews;
- (vi) utterance number in the oral interviews; (see Appendix A(2))
- (vii) number of errors in the mispronounced words;
- (viii) frequency of the British listeners' intelligibility rating at +h, h, -h and --h, according to the intelligibility rating scale for segmental errors (Table 4.2)
- (ix) syntactic scope of unintelligibility rating (including words rated -h and --h), i.e. whether intelligibility problems occurred at
 - (a) word level (i.e. only this particular mispronounced word was not understood or misunderstood in the entire utterance);
 - (b) phrase or clause level (i.e. only this particular phrase or clause in which the mispronounced words occurred was not understood or misunderstood in the entire utterance)
 - (c) sentence level (i.e. the whole utterance in which the mispronounced word occurred was not understood).
 The frequency of such occurrences was noted.
- (x) syllabic type of word : whether the mispronounced word was monosyllabic (M), disyllabic (D), or polysyllabic (P);
- (xi) grammatical type of word : whether the mispronounced word was lexical (L) or a function word (F);

- (xii) whether the mispronounced word was with stress error (+) or without stress error (-).

4.3 Analysis of Results

4.3.1 General Remarks

A first glance at the high frequency of error types a to h rated --h in Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3) will definitely give one the impression that segmental errors constituted one of the main causes of intelligibility problems for the British listeners. However, a closer look at the Tables will reveal that in most cases, intelligibility problems occurred at either phrase/clause or sentence levels. In other words, only a small percentage of intelligibility problems occurred at word level and this could be, most likely, attributed to the mispronunciation of words.

4.3.2 Intelligibility and Lexical/Function Words

Of the 606 mispronounced words listed in Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3), 471 (or 77.7%) of them were lexical words and 135 (or 22.3%) were function words. None of the intelligibility problem of the function words rated -h or --h occurred at word level. This shows that since the sole function of function words is to signal grammatical relationships, mispronunciations of such words do not interfere with intelligibility. On the other hand, mispronunciation of lexical words which convey the semantic content of utterances interferes with intelligibility to some extent. The percentage in this study was, however, rather low, ie only 73 cases or 15.5% of the intelligibility problems of the mispronounced lexical words rated -h or --h occurred at word level. In other words, a relatively small proportion of the intelligibility problems related to lexical words might be due to segmental errors.

4.3.3 Intelligibility and Mono-/Di-/Poly-syllabic Lexical Words

Of the 73 lexical words rated -h or --h with intelligibility problems arising at word level, 23 (or 31.5%) were monosyllabic, 29 (or 39.7%) were disyllabic and 21 (or 28.8%) were polysyllabic words. Approximately 12 (or 41.4%) of the disyllabic words and 12 (or 57.1%) of the polysyllabic words had stress errors. This implies that intelligibility problems might not be confined to segmental errors. Stress error or unfamiliarity of words to the British listeners could be one of the causes of intelligibility.

4.3.4 Intelligibility and Number and Type of Segmental Errors

Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3) indicate that, on the whole, the higher the number of error types contained in the words listed, the lower the degrees of intelligibility. It was also evident that words with one or two segmental errors generally had higher degrees of intelligibility than those with three or four errors. However, the results were not always consistent. For example, the word 'senior' (Int. One, Utt.21) consisting of only one error type, i.e. a, was rated --h for five listeners, and the word 'population' (Int. Eight, Utt. 13) which had three error types i.e. a, b and h, was rated +h for all seven listeners. This indicates that lack of intelligibility of mispronounced words was sometimes not related to the number of errors they contained but factors other than segmental errors, e.g. lack of shared socio-cultural knowledge of the words in context (see Chapter Six, S.6.6.)

4.3.5 Intelligibility and Error Type, Error Frequency and Error Gravity

Table 4.3 Frequency of degrees of intelligibility of error types and error gravity

Error Type	Category	Total frequency at				Total no. of occurrence	Error gravity in descending order
		+h	h	-h	--h		
a	Replacement of one vowel with another (pure vowel or diphthong)	1054 (68.6%)	13 (0.8%)	66 (4.3%)	404 (26.3%)	1537	3
b	Monophthongization of diphthongs	841 (76.5%)	5 (0.4%)	34 (3.1%)	220 (20.0%)	1100	4
c	Replacement of one consonant phoneme with another	1618 (78.5%)	13 (0.6%)	51 (2.5%)	380 (18.4%)	2062	5
d	Reduction of consonant clusters in final positions	393 (81.5%)	6 (1.3%)	11 (2.3%)	72 (14.9%)	482	7
e	Elision of a phoneme (vowel or consonant)	106 (50.5%)	2 (0.9%)	31 (14.8%)	71 (33.8%)	210	2
f	Elision of a syllable	6 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.7%)	14 (66.7%)	21	1
g	Errors in syllabic phonemes, e.g. [l] and [n]	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7	8
h	Unaspirated voiceless plosives in initial positions	663 (81.8%)	1 (0.1%)	18 (2.2%)	129 (15.9%)	811	6
Total		4688 (75.2%)	40 (0.7%)	212 (3.4%)	1290 (20.7%)	6230	

(This Table shows how many times [for all listeners] each error type was rated at +h, h, -h or --h in the whole sample.)

Table 4.3 reveals that frequency of error did not correlate with lack of intelligibility. eg Error type f which had a low frequency of 21 had a low degree of intelligibility ie 66.7% of this error type was rated --h; error type c which had a high frequency of 2062 had a high degree of intelligibility ie only 18.4% of this error type was rated --h. On the other hand, error type d which had a relatively low frequency of 482 had a high degree on intelligibility ie only 14.9% of such error type was rated --h; error type g which had an extremely low frequency of 7 had a very high degree on intelligibility ie 0% of such error type was rated --h. The table also shows that only 20.7% of all the segmental errors were rated --h whereas 75.2% of them were rated +h, indicating that segmental errors were not the major cause of intelligibility problems.

As far as error gravity is concerned, it was found that the hierarchy from most serious to least serious was in this descending order: f, e, a, b, c, h, d, g. In other words; segmental errors related to elision of a syllable (Error type f) was most serious, with 66.7% of such errors rated at --h, and segmental errors related to elision of a phoneme (Error type e) was the next most serious, with 33.8% of such errors rated at --h. On the other hand, errors in syllabic phoneme /n/ and reduction of consonant clusters (Error Types g and d) were the least serious with 0% and 14.9% of such errors rated --h, respectively. This is another clear indication that lack of intelligibility is sometimes related to error type rather than error frequency. To qualify the widely accepted notion that consonant errors constitute more intelligibility problems than vowel errors (S. 4.1), the results show that the replacement of one vowel phoneme with another (Error type a) was slightly more serious than the replacement of a consonant phoneme with another (Error type c). (For further discussion, see Chapter Seven, S.7.4.4.1 and Chapter Eight, S.8.1.1)

4.3.6 Hierarchy of Error Gravity in the Three Ethnic Groups

As was stated earlier, many factors contributed to lack of intelligibility at the segmental level. A breakdown of the statistics in Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3), irrespective of syntactic level, would yield a hierarchy of error gravity in terms of ethnic origin of subjects in this study.

Table 4.4. Frequency of degrees of intelligibility and error gravity (Chinese Subjects)

Error Type*	Total no. of occurrence	Total frequency at				Error gravity in descending order
		+h	h	-h	--h	
a	724	437(60.4%)	6(0.8%)	32(4.4%)	249(34.4%)	2
b	366	242(66.1%)	1(0.3%)	13(3.5%)	110(30.1%)	3
c	852	573(67.3%)	8(0.9%)	25(2.9%)	246(28.9%)	4
d	203	149(73.4%)	5(2.4%)	3(1.5%)	46(22.7%)	6
e	63	26(41.3%)	0(0%)	1(1.6%)	36(57.1%)	1
f	0	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	7
g	7	7(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	7
h	203	145(71.5%)	0(0%)	8(3.9%)	50(24.6%)	5

* See Page 112

(This Table shows how many times [for all listeners] each error type was rated at +h, h,

-h or --h for the Chinese subjects.)

Table 4.5 Frequency of degrees of intelligibility and error gravity (Malay subjects)

Error Type*	Total no. of occurrence	Total frequency at				Error gravity in descending order
		+h	h	-h	--h	
a	465	349 (75.0%)	6 (1.3%)	26 (5.6%)	84 (18.1%)	3
b	440	353 (80.2%)	4 (0.9%)	11 (2.5%)	72 (16.4%)	4
c	755	643 (85.2%)	4 (0.5%)	22 (2.9%)	86 (11.4%)	6
d	181	156 (86.2%)	1 (0.6%)	8 (4.4%)	16 (8.8%)	7
e	126	70 (55.6%)	2 (1.6%)	26 (20.6%)	28 (22.2%)	2
f	14	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (50.0%)	7 (50.0%)	1
g	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8
h	237	196 (82.7%)	1 (0.4%)	4 (1.7%)	36 (15.2%)	5

* See Page 112

(This Table shows how many times [for all listeners] each error type was rated at +h, h,

-h or --h for the Malay subjects.)

Table 4.6. Frequency of degrees of intelligibility and Error gravity (Indian subjects)

Error Type*	Total no. of occurrence	Total frequency at				Error gravity in descending order
		+h	h	-h	--h	
a	348	268 (77.0%)	1 (0.3%)	8 (2.3%)	71 (20.4%)	3
b	294	246 (83.7%)	0 (0%)	10 (3.4%)	38 (12.9%)	4
c	455	402 (88.4%)	1 (0.2%)	4 (0.9%)	48 (10.5%)	6
d	98	88 (89.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (10.2%)	7
e	21	10 (47.6%)	0 (0%)	4 (19.1%)	7 (33.3%)	1
f	7	5 (71.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (28.6%)	2
g	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8
h	371	322 (86.8%)	0 (0%)	6 (1.6%)	43 (11.6%)	5

* See Page 112

(This Table shows how many times [for all listeners] each error types was rated at +h, h,

-h, or --h for the Indian subjects)

The hierarchy of error gravity of each ethnic group, from most to least serious, was in this descending order :

e, a, b, c, h, d, g. (No occurrence of Error type f:
Chinese subjects)

f, e, a, b, h, c, d. (No occurrence of Error type of g :
Malay subjects)

e, f, a, b, h, c, d. (No occurrence of Error type of g :
Indian subjects)

Apart from error type c, the error gravity of other error types seemed to correlate very well in the three ethnic groups. For the Chinese subjects, error type c i.e. replacement of one consonant with another seemed to be slightly more serious than the same error type for the Malay and Indian subjects. This implies that most probably, the Chinese subjects made some specific consonant errors that interfered with intelligibility more than those made by the Malay and Indian subjects. (see Chapter Eight, S.8.1.1) The error gravity of the three ethnic groups also correlated very well with that in the whole sample i.e. f, e, a, b, c, h, d, g. Hence, it can be claimed that error types e and f, i.e. elision of a phoneme and a syllable, were more serious than other error types, and error type d i.e. reduction of consonant clusters, was the least serious.

4.3.7 Segmental Error Types and Ethnic Origin of Subjects

Table 4.7 Error type, error frequency and ethnic origin of subjects

Error Type*	Total no. of occurrence	Frequency in terms of subjects		
		Chinese	Malay	Indian
a	1537	724 (47.1%)	465 (30.3%)	348 (22.6%)
b	1100	366 (33.3%)	440 (40.0%)	294 (26.7%)
c	2062	852 (41.3%)	755 (36.6%)	455 (22.1%)
d	482	203 (42.1%)	181 (37.6%)	98 (20.3%)
e	210	63 (30.0%)	126 (60.0%)	21 (10.0%)
f	21	0 (0%)	14 (66.7%)	7 (33.3%)
g	7	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
h	811	203 (25.0%)	237 (29.2%)	371 (45.8%)
Total	6230	2418 (38.8%)	2218 (35.6%)	1594 (25.6%)

* See Page 112

(The figures were obtained from Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6).

Table 4.7 shows that only Malay and Indian subjects committed error type f (Malays : 66.7% and Indians : 33.3%) and only Chinese subjects committed error type g. However, the frequency of these 2 error types was too low to confirm that the error types were characteristics of the respective ethnic group of subjects. The Table also reveals that the frequency of error type a produced by the Chinese subjects (47.1%) was much higher than that of the Malay (30.3%) and Indian (22.6%) subjects, the frequency of error type e produced by the Malay subjects (60.0%) was much higher than that of the Chinese (30.0%) and Indian (10.0%) subjects and the frequency of error type h produced by the Indian subjects (45.8%) was much higher than that of the Chinese (25.0%) and Malay (29.2%) subjects. This, however, implies that the three ethnic groups were particularly weak in the relevant aspects of segmental error. In addition, 38.8% of the segmental errors in the whole sample was produced by the Chinese subjects, 35.6% by the Malay subjects and 25.6% by the Indian subjects. Compared with the number of interviews the three ethnic groups took part i.e. the Chinese subjects took part in 5 interviews (or 50%), the Malay subjects, 3 interviews (or 30%) and the Indian subjects, 2 interviews (or 20%), the ethnic group which committed most segmental errors (though the differences were not significant) was in this descending order: Indian, Malay and Chinese.

4.3.8 Common Segmental Errors among the Three Ethnic Groups and Intelligibility

With the exception of several vowel and consonant phonemes, the three ethnic groups share a lot of common segmental errors. Appendixes D(1), D(2) and D(3) show that the following common segmental errors produced by the three ethnic groups did not, on the whole, affect intelligibility at word level and, as such, might not be the main cause of intelligibility problems of utterances. In all cases, however, the context in which the mispronounced words occurred, played an important role in the degree of intelligibility. (See S.4.4.)

(i) Shortening of long pure vowels (Error type a):

[i:] → [i], [a:] → [a], [u:] → [ʊ], [ɔ:] → [ɒ], especially

in closed syllables. e.g.

'Street' (Int. One, Utt. 16), 'farmers' (Int. Three, Utt.8),
'choose' (Int. Ten, Utt. 40), 'caught' (Int. Ten, Utt. 24)
were rated +h for all seven listeners.

This error type, in particular [i:] -> [i], occasionally gave rise to lack of intelligibility at word level. e.g.

rated -h : 'beaches' was heard 'pictures' (List. 2; Int.
One, Utt. 17)
'sleeping' was heard 'sitting' (List.3,6,Int.
Four, Utt. 21)

rated --h : 'field' (List. 6,7; Int. One, Utt. 2 6)

(ii) Monophthongization of diphthongs (Error type b) :

[əv] -> [o] or [o:] in open syllables, and in the case of
Indian subjects [ɸ] or [ʌ] in closed syllables;
[eɪ -> [e] or [e:] in open syllables. e.g.
'go' (Int. One, Utt. 3, 10, 16, 17), 'stay' (Int. Four,
Utt.16), were rated +h for all seven listeners.

This error type occasionally gave rise to lack of intelligibility at word level, especially in monosyllabic words. e.g.

rated -h : 'aid' was heard 'eat' (List. 1 ; Int. Ten,
Utt. 19)

rated --h : 'air' (List. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7; Int. One, Utt.
14)

(iii) Reduction of consonant clusters in final positions (Error type

d): [nd] -> [n], [nt] -> [n], [st] -> [s], [ld] -> [l],
[ɲk] -> [ɲ]. e.g.

'attend' (Int. Five, Utt. 7), 'don't' (Int. Six, Utt. 23).
'last' (Int. Ten, Utt. 2), 'think' (int. Nine, Utt. 2, 3,
4, 7) were rated +h for all seven listeners.

Very few instances of this error type gave rise to lack of intelligibility at word level e.g.

'field' (Int. One, Utt. 26) was not intelligible to List.
6 and 7. Lack of intelligibility here was most probably
due to the shortening of [i:] rather than the reduction
of [ld] to [l] (See (i) above)

4.3.9 Other Segmental Errors of the Three Ethnic Groups and Intelligibility

The following segmental errors were not consistently produced by the subjects of all the three ethnic groups and, in some cases, not by the same subject, and their correlation with the degrees of intelligibility varied in different contexts.

(i) The intelligibility of words with error type a i.e. the replacement of one vowel phoneme with another depended on the quality of the phonemes replaced and the context in which they occurred.

(a) Generally speaking, replacement of [æ] with [ɛ] in all Chinese subjects and some words produced by Subject 10 (Malay) and replacement of [æ] with [ɑ] in Subject 5 (Malay) caused some intelligibility problems at word level if the words were monosyllabic or di- / polysyllabic with stress errors or without explicit contextual clues. e.g.

'lack' was heard 'let' (List. 1, 2; Int. One, Utt.9);

'badminton' (Int. Two, Utt. 13) was not intelligible to four listeners;

'Language' (Int. Four, Utt. 2) was not intelligible to five listeners; and 'campus' (Int. Five, Utt.3) was not intelligible to all seven listeners.

(b) Replacement of [ʌ] by [ɑ] was not consistent in all the three ethnic groups : words like 'just' (Int. Three, Utt. 2; Int. Six, Utt. 1; Int. Ten, Utt. 14), 'study' (Int. Two, Utt. 1; Int. Five, Utt.9) were produced correctly whereas words like 'Monday' (Int. Two, Utt. 12), 'month' (Int. Five, Utt. 13), 'come' (Int. Six, Utt. 2) were incorrectly produced. This error type normally did not affect intelligibility at word level. In cases where an intelligibility problem did occur at word level e.g. 'rubber' (Int. Three, Utt. 6), 'nothing' (Int. Nine, Utt. 14), lack of intelligibility was not due to the replaced phoneme but to the unfamiliar lexis in the context. (see S.4.4 and Chapter Six, S.6.6) and syntactic error (see Chapter Five) respectively.

(c) Replacement of [a:] with [ʌ] (only one word produced by Subject 5) : Though lack of intelligibility of the phrase 'in charge' (Int. Five, Utt. 2, 4) occurred beyond word level, it was attributed to the replacement of the vowel phoneme in the word 'charge'. It was unintelligible to List. 5 and 6 in both utterances, but was heard ^{as} 'just' by List. 1, 3 and 4, and was heard ^{as} 'interest' by List. 2 and 7 in both utterances.

(ii) The intelligibility of words with error type c i.e. replacement of one consonant phoneme with another, likewise, depended on the quality of the phonemes replaced and the context in which they occurred:

(a) On the whole, replacement of [v] with [w] by Subject 3 (Chinese), Subject 5 (Malay) and replacement of [v] with [ʊ] by both the Indian subjects (i.e. Subjects 6 and 8) did not affect intelligibility at word level e.g.

'very' (Int. Six, Utt. 19; Int. Eight, Utt. 15); 'television' (Int. Six, Utt. 21) were intelligible to all seven listeners. In several cases, such error type, however, affected intelligibility at word level. e.g.

'nervous' (Int. Six, Utt. 28) was rated --h for two listeners.

'seven' (Int. Six, Utt. 5) was rated --h for four listeners.

(For cause of intelligibility problem, see Chapter Six, S.6.6)

(b) Replacement of voiced consonant phonemes with their voiceless counterparts or vice versa, by all the three ethnic groups, affected intelligibility at word level to some extent, in particular, in monosyllabic and occasionally disyllabic words. e.g.

'bridge' was heard 'rich' (List. 4; Int. Four, Utt.6)

'bridge' was heard 'richer' (List. 7; Int. Four, Utt.6)

'pleasure' was heard 'fashion' (List. 1; Int. One, Utt.17)

'pleasure' was heard 'fresher' (List. 2; Int. One, Utt.17)

In polysyllabic words, such error types did not normally affect intelligibility, especially if there was no stress error. e.g.

'management' (Int. Seven, Utt.19) and 'conversation' (Int. Seven, Utt.16) were heard correctly by all seven listeners.

(c) Replacement of [ʃ] by [s] by Subject 3 (Chinese) and Subject 5 (Malay) : The intelligibility of words with such error type depended very much on the context in which the words occurred.

(See S.4.4) e.g. 'English' (Int. Three, Utt. 17; Int. Five, Utt.8) was heard correctly by all seven listeners, whereas 'social' (Int. Five, Utt.1) was unintelligible to five listeners at word level.

(d) Replacement of [θ] and [ʒ] with [t̪] (unaspirated) and [d] : In the case of Indian subjects, the substituted phonemes were dental rather than alveolar plosives. Such errors did not normally affect intelligibility at word level. The only instance when it obviously caused some intelligibility problem was with the word,

'bothering' (Int. One, Utt. 22) which was heard 'wondering' by List. 1 and 'ordering' by List. 4.

(e) Replacement of [r] with [d], [f] by Subject 4 (Chinese) and with [l] by subject 2 (Chinese) : (Malay and Indian subjects did not have problem with this phoneme). Such errors affected intelligibility at word level, especially in monosyllabic words and polysyllabic words with stress errors or without explicit contextual clues. e.g.

'rent' was heard 'dent' or 'den' (List. 1, 2; Int. Four, Utt. 20)

'room' was heard 'doom' (List. 1; Int. Four, Utt. 20)

'room' was heard 'door', 'doom' (List. 2; Int. Four, Utt. 20, 23)

'room' was heard 'phone' (List. 1, 4; Int. Four, Utt. 23) and

'library' (Int. Two, Utt. 1) was not intelligible to all seven listeners at word level.

(f) Replacement of dark [ɤ] with clear [l] normally did not affect intelligibility at word level. e.g.

'feel' (Int. One, Utt. 16,17), 'people' (Int. Four, Utt.9) were correctly heard by all seven listeners.

(iii) The intelligibility of words with error type e i.e. elision of a phoneme depended very much on the context in which the words occurred. The most common phonemes elided were [k] and [l] among the three ethnic groups and in many cases, this error type affected intelligibility at word level. e.g.

(a) Elision of [l] rated --h :

'helping' (List. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; Int. Ten, Utt. 22)

'hotel' (List. 3, 5; Int. Six, Utt. 16)

'also' (List. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7; Int. Eight, Utt. 18)

(b) Elision of [k] rated --h :

'dictionary' (List. 3, 5, 6; Int. Two, Utt. 11)

'section' (List. 3, 5; Int. Ten, Utt. 19)

(c) Elision of [l] rated -h :

'hotel' was heard 'hotter' (List. 1, 2, 6, 7; Int. Six, Utt. 18)

(d) Elision of [k] rated -h :

'dictionary' was heard 'decent early' (List. 1; Int. Two, Utt. 9)

'dictionary' was heard 'decent ?' (List. 2; Int. Two, Utt. 9)

'section' was heard 'session' (List. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7; Int. Ten, Utt. 19, 40, 41, 42)

On the other hand, 'difficult' (Int. Two, Utt. 9) and 'helpful' (Int. Two, Utt. 5) etc., were heard correctly by all seven listeners. (See also S. 4.4. and Chapter Six, S.6.6).

(iv) The frequency of words with error type f i.e. elision of a syllable was very low and it only occurred among Malay and Indian subjects in this study. Such error caused lack of intelligibility at word level to some extent. eg 'rehabilitate' (Int. Ten, Utt. 25) was not intelligible to all seven listeners.

'ambassador' (Int. Seven, Utt. 15) was not intelligible to one listener.

On the other hand, 'probably' (Int. Six, Utt. 28) was heard correctly by five listeners.

(v) There was only one word with error type g i.e. error in syllabic phoneme [n] in the word 'garden' (Int. One, Utt. 8) and it was intelligible to all seven listeners.

(vi) Unaspirated voiceless plosives in initial positions (Error type h) : Subject 7 (Malay) did not commit such errors. In the case of Subject 1 (Chinese), voiceless plosives in initial positions were weakly aspirated and for other Subjects, totally

unaspirated. Such errors, on the whole, did not effect intelligibility at word level. e.g.

'compared' (Int. Ten, Utt. 11, 12), 'programme' (Int. Eight, Utt. 7, 8, 10); 'communicate' (Int. Four, Utt. 2) were all intelligible to all seven listeners.

However, intelligibility problems might occur in monosyllabic words e.g.

'tense' was heard 'dense' (List. 2, 4; Int. One, Utt. 15)

'poor' was heard 'bored' (List. 1; Int. Three, Utt. 11)

4.4 Phonological/Contextual Factors and Intelligibility

Based on the results analyzed in Sections 4.3.8 and 4.3.9, some general hypotheses as to what kinds of phonological and contextual factors might affect intelligibility could be arrived at.

(i) Mispronunciation of vowels in monosyllabic, lexical words without consonant ^{clues} and explicit contextual clues might give rise to lack of intelligibility. e.g.

'air' (Int. One, Utt. 14) in 'The air here are not so.....' was unintelligible to six listeners.

(ii) Mispronunciation of vowels in monosyllabic, lexical words with correct consonant clues was intelligible if contextual clues were explicit. e.g.

'go' (Int. One, Utt. 10) in '..... not many places to go la'.

'pool' (Int. One, Utt. 8) in 'And got swimming pool inside la'

'Street' (Int. One, Utt. 16) in '..... you feel so low walking in the street la.' (2)

(iii) Mispronunciation of vowels in monosyllabic, lexical words with correct consonant clues might cause lack of intelligibility if contextual clues were not explicit. e.g.

'game' (Int. Two, Utt. 2) in 'And for the games, a bit only la' was rated -h for one listener and --h for six listeners.

(iv) Mispronunciation of consonants in monosyllabic lexical words with correct vowel clues might affect intelligibility if contextual clues were not explicit. e.g.

'bridge' (Int. Four, Utt. 6) in '.... they got a bridge ha' was rated -h for three listeners.

(v) Consonants, though mispronounced, might give helpful clues to monosyllabic lexical words if the vowels were correctly produced and contextual clues were explicit. e.g.

'time' (Int. Four, Utt. 13) in 'This is first time I have been' was rated +h for all seven listeners.

(vi) Mispronunciation of more than one phoneme in a disyllabic or polysyllabic lexical word with stress errors and without explicit contextual clues might affect intelligibility. e.g.

'language' (Int. Four, Utt. 2) in 'Their language' was rated --h for five listeners.

'dictionary' (Int. Two, Utt. 9) in 'I must find theer..... dictionary' was rated -h for one listener and --h for four listeners.

'village' (Int. Three, Utt. 1) in 'You mean my village ah ?' was rated --h for all the seven listeners.

(vii) Mispronunciation of more than one phoneme in a disyllabic or polysyllabic lexical word with correct stress and explicit contextual clues was usually intelligible. e.g.

'resort' (Int. Four, Utt. 9) in '.....a place, a resort where people will spend their leisure times there.' was rated +h for all seven listeners.

'language' (Int. Seven, Utt. 11) in '..... the medium of language will be in English' was rated +h for all seven listeners.

'Vancouver' (Int. Five, Utt. 17) in '..... send me to Vancouver of Canada' was rated h for two listeners and +h for four listeners.

(viii) Mispronunciation of a vowel or a consonant phoneme of a lexical word and its adjacent word, both of which gave new information to the utterance, i.e. information which has not been previously supplied, might affect intelligibility. e.g.

'sleeping room' (Int. Four, Utt. 21) in 'We make one room as sleeping room' was rated -h for two listeners and --h for three listeners.

'aid section' (Int. Ten, Utt. 21) in 'I am doing just in the aid section' was rated -h for four listeners and --h for two listeners.

(ix) Mispronounced words conveying given information, i.e. information already supplied by the previous context of utterance, usually had higher degree of intelligibility than words carrying new information. (For discussion and examples, see Chapter Six, S.6.6.9).

(x) Whether or not a listener is familiar with a mispronounced word in context is a crucial factor for intelligibility. e.g. The words which the seven listeners were not familiar with, such as 'rubber tapper' (Int. Three, Utt. 7), 'off - campus' (Int. Five, Utt. 2), 'TOEFL' (Int. Five, Utt. 10), 'Orientation week' (Int. One, Utt. 20) had very low degrees of intelligibility. However, words with similar error types which the listeners were familiar with, had very high degrees of intelligibility. Some examples are :

Familiar lexis	Int. No./ Utt. No	Error type	Degree of int.	Frequency	Unfamiliar lexis	Int. No./ Utt. No.	Error Type	Degree of int.	Frequency
cannot	Int. Ten, Utt. 7	a,h	+h	7	tapper	Int. Three Utt. 7	a,h	-h --h	5 2
some	Int. Two Utt. 6	a	+h	7	rubber	Int. Three Utt. 7	a	-h --h	5 2
traffic	Int. Two Utt. 9	a,h	+h	7	campus	Int. Five Utt. 2	a,h	--h	7
programme	Int. Eight Utt. 5	b,h	+h	7	TOEFL	Int. Five Utt. 10	b,h	+h -h --h	1 1 5
explain	Int. Seven Utt. 14	a,b	+h	7	Orientation	Int. One Utt. 20	a, b	--h	7

(For further details and discussion, see Chapter Six, S.6.6.8)

4.5 Suprasegmental Errors and Intelligibility

In this study, suprasegmentals refer to vocal effects which extend over more than one sound segment in an utterance, viz. word stress, rhythm, tonic syllables, tone group and tones.

4.5.1 Definition of Suprasegmental 'Errors'

It is not very difficult to define word stress in English, which is usually a fixed shape for any English word. (See S.4.5.2) Any deviation from the suprasegmental word-shape can be regarded as an error.

On the other hand, as there are so many ways of saying any utterance, it is very difficult to define rhythm, tonic syllable, tone group and intonation as all these suprasegmental features play an important role in shaping the whole utterance. Hence, there are hardly any effective measures for determining 'errors' pertaining to these features. In Section 4.5.5, some linguists' views on the various aspects of suprasegmental features in English are discussed. For the purpose of this study, an RP native speaker was requested to say some of the subjects' utterances and this was recorded and taken as a model for suprasegmental features of the utterances as being an instance of a normal neutral realization. Any deviation from this model by the subjects was considered an 'error'. (See S.4.5.6 to 4.5.9)

4.5.2 Word Stress in English

The notion of stress in English varies from scholar to scholar. A physiological definition of stress is, by far, the most common. For Jones (1969:245), for instance, stress is 'the degree of force with which a sound or syllable is uttered. A strong force of utterance means energetic action of all the articulatory organs. it involves a strong "push" from the chest wall and consequently strong force of exhalation; this generally gives the objective impression of loudness'. For Abercrombie (1967:35), a stressed syllable is produced by a 'reinforced chest-pulse' which is produced by 'exceptionally great muscular action' and this muscular chest-pulse is called a 'stressed pulse' which usually has the 'effect of producing a louder sounding syllable.' For Gimson (1970:223), a sound or syllable which is stressed is one upon which there is 'expended in the articulation relatively great

breath effort and muscular energy' and it is perceived by the listener as 'greater loudness associated with the sound or syllable.'

Besides associating 'stress' with 'loudness', Crystal (1980:332) brings in 'length' and 'pitch' in his concept of stress:

Stress is the degree of force used in producing a syllable. The usual distinction is between stressed and unstressed syllables, the former being more prominent than the latter. The prominence is usually due to an increase in loudness of the stressed syllable, but increases in length and often pitch may contribute to the overall impression of prominence.

Brown's (1977:47) concept of stress is similar to Crystal's, but she distinguishes a stressed syllable from an unstressed syllable in the 'degree of explicitness of articulation of the syllable.' :

Stressed syllables will be marked by standing out in pitch against the surrounding unstressed syllables either by the pitch moving, or being longer and louder than unstressed syllables, and by being pronounced more distinctly. In a stressed syllable, the initial consonant(s) and the vowel will be comparatively clearly enunciated whereas in an unstressed syllable, the consonants may be very weakly enunciated and the vowel obscure .

It is not made fully explicit what type of enunciation 'obscure' is as far as a vowel is concerned. Brazil et al. (1980:3), however, give a clearer picture of the change of vowel quality in unstressed syllables: In producing a stressed syllable,

one might reasonably expect the speaker's extra effort in putting more air from his lungs to cause more intense vibration of the vocal cords and thus be heard as an increase in loudness. However, the extra effort can also cause a tightening and shortening of the vocal cords and a subsequent higher pitch, while again stressed syllables tend to be longer — a fact additionally emphasized in English by the tendency to change the vowel quality of unstressed syllable towards /ə/.

In short, an English stressed syllable can generally be realised as a combination of greater articulatory force or loudness, greater duration or length, change in pitch and often vowel quality. Word stress is the fixed shape with these features within the syllables of a word. (3)

Moreover, English has a 'free' or 'moveable' stress pattern i.e. stress may fall on any syllable in a word, even words derived from a common root. eg 'photograph, phot^ographer and phot^ographic.

Different degrees of stress are recognized in polysyllabic words in English. In the American structuralist tradition, four degrees are usually distinguished viz (from strongest to weakest) primary, secondary, tertiary and weak stress. eg when the compound word

1 4 3 4 2 4 3 4
'elevator operator' is read in isolation. (Crystal; 1980:332)

British linguists, on the other hand, generally distinguish three degrees of stress, viz primary, secondary, and weak. eg éducation or ,education (``': primary stress; ',,: secondary stress; weak stress: unmarked).

4.5.3 Stress Errors and Intelligibility

Since the main function of stress is to contribute to the marking of the meaning of words, the 'information-bearing words' in an utterance, Brown (1977:49) believes that native speakers rely very much on the stress pattern of a word in order to identify it :

We find it very difficult to interpret an utterance in which a word is pronounced with the wrong stress pattern - we begin to "look up" possible words under this wrong stress pattern.

Gimson (1970:238) makes this point:

A word pronounced with the correct sound sequence may well be misunderstood if the relative prominence of the syllables is incorrect.

Nelson (1982:68) cited Ohala's (1977:322) view that although pitch is an important (if not the most important) cue for stress in Hindi, it is 'far weaker than in English, perhaps because unstressed syllables are not detectably reduced, as they are in English', and so stress plays a very marginal role in Hindi. Thus, 'no words are differentiated solely by stress.' As a result, some sort of intelligibility problem can be expected. (See also S.4.5.4)

An analysis of the stress patterns of the subjects in this study shows that at word level, correlation between stress error and the degree of intelligibility for British listeners depended very much on whether the word was also mispronounced at segmental level, and if so, what type of segmental error was made and the context in which it occurred.

4.5.4 Stress Patterns of the Subjects

Generally speaking, the stress patterns of the three ethnic groups in the main corpus differed from those of RP in five ways, as Tay (1982(a) : 61) claims : (4)

- (i) equal stress in words that have primary and secondary stress eg
,Celeb'ration (RP) 'celebration (SME) (ie equally strong)
- (ii) absence of stress distinctions to mark different parts of speech eg
in'crease (v) (RP) in'crease (v and n) (SME)
'increase (n)
- (iii) same stress pattern on words derived from a common root. eg
advant'age, ,advant'ageous (RP) advant'age, advant'ageous (SME)
- (iv) misplacement of stress. eg
'colleague (RP) colleague (SME)
spécific (RP) s'pecific (SME)
- (v) tendency to stress the second element of a compound noun. eg
'crime rate (RP) crime 'rate (SME)

A careful analysis of the stress patterns of the subjects in this study reveals that the characteristics mentioned above were all present. However, some of the features were more characteristic of ^acertain ethnic group and a separate discussion of the stress patterns of each ethnic group and their correlation with intelligibility was, thus, deemed necessary.

4.5.4.1 Word Stress Patterns of Chinese Subjects and Intelligibility

Chao (1970:35) posits that 'stress in Chinese is primarily an enlargement in pitch range and time duration and only secondarily in loudness. He also points out that 'sequences of normally stressed syllables without intermediate pause, whether in a phrase or in a compound word, are not all of the same degree of phonetic stress, the last being the strongest, the first next, and the intermediate being least stressed.'

There are at least two different views about the influence of stress in Chinese on English :

(i) Platt and Weber (1980:56) claim that in Singapore English, with predominantly Chinese speakers, 'there is a definite tendency for a backward shift of primary stress. Even in cases where the first syllable of a word retains the primary stress, it is often given less prominence than it would receive in RP, whilst another syllable, often the last or the penultimate, receives greater prominence than in RP e.g. *úusually*, *fórmerỳ*. This is often the cases when the word also receives a greater prominence within the sentence intonation pattern.'

(ii) Tay (1982(b):139), however, argues that since Platt and Weber (1980) and Tongue (1979) perceive a change in pitch in words produced by Singapore speakers of English as the chief perceptual cue to identify stress, they tend to argue for a tendency of Singaporeans to stress the final syllable of a word as it is 'invariably' the final syllable that has the fall in pitch. Her opinion, on the contrary, is that some speakers of Singapore English use mainly length and loudness instead of a change in pitch to express stress and are, thus, not heard as stress by Platt, Weber and Tongue.

The sample of speakers in the present study seemed to support Platt and Tongue's observation, which coincides with Chao's observation on stress patterns in Chinese. The stress patterns of the Chinese subjects were realised with length, loudness and very often higher pitch. Generally speaking, primary stress fell on the second syllable of a disyllabic word and in the case of polysyllabic words, primary stress tended to fall on the last syllable and sometimes the penultimate syllable, especially when they pronounced the vowel of the last syllable as [ə], while the first syllable tended to receive secondary stress and the medial syllables received least stress. In addition, both primary and weak stresses seemed to be slightly stronger than those of RP and there was no clear distinction between primary and secondary stress.

Correlation between stress error and the degree of intelligibility depended on whether the word was segmentally mispronounced, what type of segmental error it was and the context in which it occurred. e.g.

Without stress error	Degree of Int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
re'sort [ri'sɔt] in 'That means a place, a resort where people will spend their leisure times there.'	+h	7	a,a	context: explicit
(Int. Four, Utt. 9) (3)				
compare [kəm'peɪə] in 'but the seaside you compare to the Penang one is...'	+h	7	a,h	context: explicit
(Int. Nine, Utt. 14)				
population [pɒpjv'leʃən] in 'the population is now, I think, two hundred thousand'	+h	7	b	context: explicit
(Int. Nine, Utt. 3)				
recreation [ˌrikri'eʃən] in 'Muar don't have much recreation (Int. Nine, Utt. 6)	-h --h	1 6	a,b	context: not explicit
With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
senior [sinɪə] in 'The senior are so chil they are so fussy' (Int. One, Utt. 21)	+h --h	2 5	a	context: explicit but unfamiliar to listeners
dictionary [ˌdɪʃənə'li] in 'I cannot study la. I must find theer dictionary.'	+h -h --h	1 2 4	c,e	context: not explicit
(Int. Two, Utt. 9)				
communicate [ˌkɒmjv'neɪt] in 'and cannot communicate with person la'	+h	7	a,a,b,h	context: explicit
(Int. Three, Utt. 14)				

4.5.4.2 Word Stress Patterns of Malay Subjects and Intelligibility

There are, in fact, similar views on the stress patterns of Malay or Bahasa Malaysia. They are :

- (i) For Hokker (1895:97), in a stem consisting of two syllables in Malay, the accent lies on the penultimate syllable, except when this syllable contains [ə]. However, a stem lengthened by one suffix forming a polysyllabic word or a particle, 'undergoes a shift of accent towards the new penultimate, when the accent originally

lies on the penultimate syllable of the stem eg 'pipi (cheek), a stem with two syllables + na is pronounced as pipina.

(ii) For Ross (5), the stress in simple, reduplicated or doubled words in Malay spoken in isolation is normally on the penultimate syllable unless that syllable ends in [ə], or the two syllables of a word contain vowels of similar quality with an h between them, as in 'mahal' (expensive), in which case the stress is on the final syllable. The same observation applies to derived words except when they have a suffix in which case the stress often remains on the originally penultimate syllable of the simple word or stem, but not infrequently it is transferred to the new penultimate of the derivative and sometimes, the same word may be pronounced in both ways eg from 'manis' (sweet) there is a derivative pronounced 'manisan' or 'manisan' in similar conditions and without any difference in meaning.

(iii) For Ramish (1969: 110), accent in Malay is not phonemic as it is fixed and predictable. She distinguishes three degrees of accent which are dependent upon the location in the word and the vowels with which they occur:

Primary accent or stress occurs on monosyllabic words and in fixed position on words of more than one syllable. Disyllabic words carry primary accent on the penultimate syllable, unless the vowel of the penultimate syllable is [ə], in which case primary accent is shifted to the last syllable. Polysyllabic words carry primary accent on the vowel of the penultimate syllable, unless the vowel of the penultimate syllable is [ə], in which case it is shifted to the vowel of the antepenultimate syllable.

Secondary accent or stress is that accent which occurs on the remaining syllables of a word, after the placement of primary accent, unless the vowel of such syllable(s) is [ə]. Weak or unaccented syllables are those whose vowel is [ə] and are unstressed or non-syllabic when the word becomes an utterance or part of a larger utterance.

Moreover, Ramish (1969: 117) points out:

Stress in Malay is realized as greater articulatory force, or greater loudness, although the difference between the degrees of stress is not great. Those syllables carrying primary stress are only slightly louder than those with secondary

stress, which in turn are only slightly louder than those weakly stressed.

The Malay subjects in this study have obviously transferred the stress patterns of their L₁ to their speaking of English. They did use greater articulatory force in the realization of stress but compared with RP, there was no clear distinction between the three degrees of stress in terms of intensity : Their primary stress was not as strong as that of RP. Neither was their weak stress as weak as that of RP.

Generally speaking, there was a strong tendency to stress the first syllable of a disyllabic word except when they pronounced the vowel of this syllable as [ə] or sometimes [e], in which case the stress shifted to the last syllable. In polysyllabic words, the primary stress tended to fall on the penultimate syllable unless they pronounced the vowel of this syllable as [ə] or sometimes [i], in which case it was shifted to the antepenultimate and sometimes the last syllable. (See examples below.)

Stress errors and the degrees of intelligibility again depended on whether the word was segmentally mispronounced, what type of segmental error it was and whether contextual clues were helpful or not. Some examples are :

Without stress error	Degree of Int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
'language [læŋgwetʃ] in 'And I think the <u>medium</u> of language will be <u>English</u> ' (Int. Seven, Utt. 11)	+h	7	c	context: explicit
foundation [fəʊndesən] in '.... I in charge the Foundation Science for government' (Int. Five, Utt. 4)	+h --h	1 6	b,c	context: not explicit
attend [etən] in 'I think I like to attend <u>the class</u> ' (Int. Five, Utt. 7)	+h	7	a,d	context: explicit
adjust [ə'dʒʌs] in 'And then I cannot adjust <u>myself</u> ' (Int. Ten, Utt. 7)	+h	7	d	context: quite explicit

With stress error	Degree of Int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
development [diwe'lopman] in 'Development studies in <u>Social Science</u> ' (Int. Five, Utt, 1)	-h --h	5 2	a,c,d	context: explicit but unfamiliar to listeners.
interested [intə'restəd] in 'I am not so interested <u>in</u> , actually <u>prostitution work</u> ' (Int. Ten, Utt. 39)	++h	7		No segmental error, context: explicit
certificate [sə'tifikət] in 'you must have the certificate'	++h --h	4 3		No segmental error; context: not explicit
Canada [kə'nada] in '..... send me to <u>vancouver</u> of Canada ' (Int. Five, Utt. 12)	+h --h	6 1	a,a,a,h	context: explicit

4.5.4.3 Word Stress Patterns of Indian Subjects and Intelligibility

There are at least two different views about the intensity of stress in Tamil and its influence on English :

(i) Both Gumperz (1982:121) and Pillai (1966:133) observe that in Tamil English, no syllables are stressed significantly more than any others and Pillai believes that this feature interferes with intelligibility when they speak to British native speakers :

One of the factors which impedes the comprehension of Tamil English by the native speakers is that Tamil English does not have phonetic stress. In Tamil English, all the syllables are evenly stressed, a carry-over from Tamil.

(ii) Ramish (1969:165) refutes Arden's (1962:59) statement, 'There is no accent in Tamil. All syllables are pronounced with the same emphasis', arguing that there is evidence of stress on the root syllable of words in Tamil, which is predictable and therefore nonphonemic. Moreover, for her, stress in Tamil is realized as 'greater articulatory force, sometimes, but not always, with a simultaneous change in pitch level, and as increased duration of the initial consonant of the stressed syllable.' (P.168)

As for placement of stress in Tamil and its influence on English, there are differing views too:

(i) Nelson (1982:68) comments that 'one of the most striking features of the Indian English flow of speech is likely to be the placement of stress on a syllable adjacent to the one where it is expected. e.g character for 'character.

(ii) Ramish (1969:129), on the other hand, observes the carry-over from the placement of stress in Tamil to the placement of stress in English:

In Tamil, primary stress occurs on the first syllable of the word; weak stress is the realization of syllables in final positions. All other syllables are unstressed.

My own sample shows that differences of loudness and length could be distinguished in the Indian subjects' (both have Tamil as L1) speech, which seemed to be the parallel of stress in RP. However, no syllables were stressed significantly more than any other syllables. Moreover, the primary stress was much weaker than that of RP, while secondary stress seemed non-existent. As for placement of stress, my sample seemed to coincide with Ramish's observation, especially in polysyllabic words.

On the whole, in disyllabic words, the first syllable was slightly more stressed than the second. e.g.

Without stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
'problem ['p̄rabl̄əm] in 'until now, I have no problem'. (Int. Six, Utt.6)	+h	7	a,h	context: explicit
(Clues: in Interviewer's question, 'How do you find the <u>conditions</u> there ?)				
'probably [p̄rabli] in 'And <u>most probably I take two or one month for finally settling down everything</u> ' (Int. Six, Utt. 28)	+h --h	5 2	a,f,h	context: explicit

With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
'hotel ['hɒtəl] in 'The Hotel	+h	1	b,e	context:
	-h	4		explicit put
and then somemoreMag.-	--h	2		probably not
Magnum' (Int. Six, Utt. 16)				familiar to
(Clues:in Interviewer's				listeners
question, 'What <u>programmes</u> do				
you like ?')				

Like the Malay subjects, there was a tendency to shift the primary stress to the second syllable of a disyllabic word when they pronounced the vowel of the first syllable as [ə] or [i]. e.g.

With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
nervous [nə'vʌs] in 'still I	+h	2	a,c	context: explicit but unfamiliar to listeners
feel nervous to <u>contact</u>	h	1		
<u>seniors</u> ' (Int. Six, Utt. 28)	--h	4		
seniors [sin'Iəz] in the same	+h	2	a	same as above
utt.	-h	2		
	--h	3		
purpose [pə'pʊz] in 'because	--h	7	a,h	context: explicit but wrong word choice
<u>Channel Three</u>				
is eris only purpose				
for <u>commercial</u> .' (Int. Six, Utt. 25)				

In polysyllabic words, primary stress usually fell on the first syllable of a word and weaker stress on the final whereas medial syllables were unstressed. e.g.

With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error Type	Comment
'communication [kəmjunikeʃən]	+h	2	a,a,b,h	context: explicit but unfamiliar to listeners
in 'Mass Communication' (Int. Eight, Utt. 1)	-h	1		
	--h	4		
'population [ˈpɒpjvleʃən] in	+h	7	a,b,h,	context: quite explicit
'and the majority of the				
population <u>in Malaysia</u>				
.....' (Int. Eight, Utt. 13)				

Occasionally, the final syllable of a polysyllabic word received the primary stress while the weaker stress fell on the penultimate syllable, especially when the subjects pronounced the vowel of the first syllable as [ɔ] or [i] e.g.

With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
included [ɪnkluˈdɪd] in 'Four of us included <u>me</u> .' (Int. eight, Utt. 17)	++h	7	a	context: explicit
Malaysian [məleɪˈʃiən] in 'For Malaysians ah, for all must need' (Int. Six, Utt. 18)	-h --h	1 6	b	context: explicit but unfamiliar to listeners

There were two instances where the penultimate syllable received the primary stress and the final, weak stress. i.e.

With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
interested [ɪntəˈrestɪd] in 'It shows that they are very interested <u>in</u> , you see, <u>in</u> <u>TV3 programmes</u> ' (Int. Eight, Utt. 15)	+h --h	5 2	a	context: explicit
interesting [ɪntəˈrestɪŋ] in 'I think <u>TV3 programmes</u> are really interesting.' (Int. Eight, Utt. 12)	+h -h --h	5 1 1	a	context: explicit

For Subject 6, some of the polysyllabic words were so weakly and evenly stressed that none of the syllables were stressed significantly more than the others. e.g.

With stress error	Degree of int.	No. of response	Error type	Comment
family [fæməli] in 'How <u>many</u> <u>people</u> in my family' (Int. Six, Utt. 3)	++h	7		No segmental error; context: explicit
developing [dɪvələpɪŋ] in 'Newadays <u>Kampar</u> is under developing <u>area</u> ' (Int. Six, Utt. 11)	+h	7	a,c	context: quite explicit

To sum up, though stress error might cause some intelligibility problems, it was by no means the sole factor. The examples given in Sections 4.5.4.1, 4.5.4.2 and 4.5.4.3 show that words with stress errors were intelligible to all or the majority of the British listeners when the contextual clues were explicit and especially when there was no segmental error. Words with stress errors, coupled with segmental errors and without explicit context, usually caused serious intelligibility problems. On the other hand, words without stress errors normally did not cause intelligibility problems if segmental errors were those which did not normally interfere with intelligibility. (See S. 4.3.8 and 4.3.9) However, in cases when context was not explicit or not familiar to the listeners, some degree of an intelligibility problem would occur. Moreover, the three ethnic groups had different stress patterns, especially in the placement of stress in words. However, whether the misplacement occurred on the first, medial or last syllable of a word, it was not a crucial factor determining the degrees of intelligibility. Segmental errors and, more importantly, context played a more vital role.

4.5.5 Rhythm and Intonation of English

4.5.5.1 Rhythm

For Halliday (1970:1), 'foot' is the unit on which the rhythm of spoken English is based. Each foot normally consists either of one stressed syllable (or in his term 'salient' syllable) or of one stressed syllable followed by one or more weak or unstressed syllables. The first syllable in the foot which carries the beat is always stressed, though a foot may begin with a silent beat. Moreover, whereas every word which is pronounced in isolation must bear a stress, when words are combined in utterances, not all of them are stressed. In general, stressed syllables in utterances are :

- (i) one-syllable words of the 'content' class (lexical words)
- (ii) the accented syllables of words with more than one syllable.

Unstressed syllables in utterances are :

- (i) one-syllable words of the 'form' class (structural or function words)
- (ii) the non-accented syllables of words with more than one syllable, e.g.

A B C D

Peter / spends his / weekends at the / sports club. (/ = foot boundary)

is an utterance consisting of four feet and the rhythmic beat consists of stressed syllables in 'Peter', 'spends', 'weekends' and 'sports'. All other unstressed syllables occurring between the stressed syllables are compressed as far as possible in order to allow the next stressed syllable to come on the regular beat. In other words, the time taken by each foot is 'roughly' equal but not 'exactly' equal. Thus, a foot with four syllables, e.g. Segment C, will usually take longer than a foot with two syllables, e.g. Segment D, to utter.

Brown (1977:44) voices a similar opinion :

The rhythm of speech is not entirely regular, as no rhythmic human activity will be entirely regular.There are occasions when speech is much more obviously rhythmically regular than it is in conversation or the reading aloud of prose.

Platt et al. (1984:136) also point out that when listening to some speakers of English, only 'the more prominent syllables occur at fairly regular intervals of time.'

English is, thus, a language with stress-timed rhythm i.e. one in which stressed syllables recur at roughly regular intervals of time, regardless of the number of intervening unstressed syllables in utterances.

4.5.5.2 Rhythmic 'Errors' and Intelligibility

It is generally agreed that correct rhythm is a crucial factor for intelligibility of speech. If a native speaker listener is unable to perceive a rhythm which he can recognise by using his native speaker's competence, he lacks the means to break up the message into its coherent parts. Neither can he recognise the natural divisions and groups which are essential cues to meaning and hence, some impediment to intelligibility may arise. Allen (1954:84), for instance, posits that 'speech rhythm functions mainly to recognise the information - bearing units in a coherent package, thus, permitting speech communication to proceed efficiently.'

Taylor (1981:225) emphasizes vowel length in relation to correct rhythmic pattern for intelligibility :

Clear distinction in vowel length between stressed and unstressed syllables is one of the most vital things to achieve if native listeners are to be able to perceive or impose correct rhythm patterns in the speech of nonnative speakers.

Brown (1977:45) asserts that since the rhythmic beat in English provides a necessary 'structure of information' for the utterance 'if the speaker attempts to speak for sometime without establishing some sort of rhythm, with jerky stops and starts and uneven pauses, his listeners will have to work very hard to work out what it is that the speaker is saying.'

Platt et al. (1984:137) also state that 'differences in speech rhythm can sometimes cause problems in communication between speakers of different varieties of English, even among the more established varieties.'

4.5.5.3 Intonation

(i) Tone Group, Tonality and Tonicity

For Halliday (1970:3), 'tone group' is the unit of intonation in English and it often corresponds to a 'clause, including simple sentences, main clauses, co-ordinate clauses and some subordinate clauses.' Each tone group consists of one or more feet and one of the stressed syllables in one of the feet is more prominent, i.e. often longer and may be louder, than all the others in the tone group and this more prominent syllable is called the tonic syllable. The division of an utterance into tone groups and the placement of tone group boundaries is called tonality. e.g.

// Peter / spends his / weekends at the / sports club //

(NB//:tone group boundary; underlined : tonic syllable, ʌ: pitch movement).

The stretch from the heavy stress to the end of the foot is called tonic segment and it is here that the significant change of pitch direction occurs.

Moreover, each tone group is 'one unit of information, one "block" in the message that the speaker is communicating.' The particular meaning that the speaker wishes to convey may make it necessary to split a single clause into two or more groups or to

combine two or more clauses into one tone group. The placement of the tonic syllable depends on the information which the speaker wants to focus on and Halliday (1970:40) calls this kind of information 'new' ie the part of the information which the speaker 'has decided to present as not being already available to the listener', and the part of the information that is not 'new' is referred to as 'given' ie the part of the information which is already known or assumed to be known. The 'new' information may come anywhere in the tone group, but it usually comes after 'given'. The 'neutral' or 'unmarked' position for the tonic syllable is on the last content word in the tone group and this is known as 'neutral tonicity.' Hence, the placement of the tonic syllable and foot within the tone group and the consequent division of the tone group into tonic and pretonic elements of structure (see below) is called tonicity. eg

// I / I've / just come / back from / Germany //
could be an answer to 'Where have you just come back from?'
with only 'Germany' as 'new' information.

Tonic syllable may fall on a function word in an utterance. eg
// I / I have / just come / back from / Germany //
could be an answer to 'Who has just come back from Germany?'
with only 'I' as 'new' information.

The tonic syllable may also be shifted to content words in other positions: eg
// Jane goes / shopping / in town / every / Friday //
could be an answer to 'Where does Jane go shopping every Friday?'
with only 'town' as 'new' information.

Halliday also contends that there are two kinds of tone groups.

(i) Simple tone group with single tonic and (ii) compound tone group with double tonic. Each simple tone group consists of a tonic, or tonic segment, which extends from the tonic syllable right up to the end of the tone group and this may or may not be preceded by a pretonic (or pretonic segment). eg in
// Everybody / seems to have / gone away on / holiday //
the tonic begins on the first syllable and extends over the whole tone group and there is no pretonic, but in
// Jane may be / going on / holiday at the / end of the month //
the first two feet form a pretonic segment and the rest form the tonic.

On the other hand, a compound tone group consists of two tonic segments, one following the other. eg in

// Robert can / have it if / you don't / want it //

the first tonic begins at 'Robert' and the second at 'you'.

Compound tone groups may also have one pretonic segment which precedes both tonics. eg

// Arthur and / Jane may be / late with / all this / rain we're / having //

However, no pretonic segment can come in between the two tonic segments of a compound tone group.

For Crystal (1969:207), apart from the nucleus (or tonic), the tone unit (or tone group) may consist of three other segments, viz. (i) the head, which he refers to the stretch of utterance extending from the first stressed and usually pitch-prominent syllable, up to, but not including the nucleus. It consists of an unspecified number of stressed and unstressed syllables; (ii) the prehead, which he refers to any syllables preceding the head. It consists of an unspecified number of unstressed or slightly stressed syllables; (iii) the tail or nuclear tail, which he refers to the unspecified number of stressed or unstressed syllables following the nuclear syllable, usually containing the pitch movement until the end of the tone unit. Hence, the internal structure of his tone unit consists of : Prehead, Head, Nucleus and Tail, with Nucleus the only obligatory element.

There is a lot of parallelism between Crystal's concept of tone unit and that of Brazil. For Brazil et al. (1980:40), there are three segments in a tone unit ie the proclitic segment, the tonic segment and the enclitic segment, of which only the tonic segment is obligatory. Since the tonic segment begins with the first 'prominent' syllable, the onset, and ends with the last 'prominent' syllable, the tonic, they may be one and the same syllable as in utterance (ii) below. Thus, there are no 'prominent' syllables in the proclitic or enclitic segment. eg

Proclitic Segment	Tonic Segment	Enclitic Segment
(i) he was	Going to <u>GO</u>	
(ii) it was a	<u>WED</u>	nesday

(Capital letters: 'Prominent' syllables, Capital letters + underlined: 'tonic' syllable)

(11) Tones

For Halliday (1970:7), 'tone' refers to the selection in the tone groups form a finite pitch contrastive system. He recognizes five simple tones with these pitch movements: fall, high rise or 'sharp' fall-rise, fall rise, low rise, rise-fall and two compound tones with these pitch movement : fall plus low rise and rise-fall plus low rise.

Halliday calls his Tone 1 (falling tone), the 'neutral' or normal tone which is used for declarative clauses to indicate complete simple statement and interrogative clauses for WH - type. eg

//1 I / know / John // (a complete statement)

//1 What's the / time // (WH - question)

His Tone 2 (high rising or 'sharp' fall rise) is the neutral tone for interrogative clause of 'yes / no' type, those where the question is one of polarity.

eg // 2 Did he / come //

He further characterizes his Tone 3 (low rise) as a 'compromise' between a fall and a rise, and is usually used to 'confirm a previous statement' or 'an expectation' and 'accedes to a request, or unexpressed expectation', or indicates the information conveyed is 'unfinished' or of 'secondary importance' as it is something already known or 'given'.

His Tone 4 (falling-rising) indicates something like 'it may seem as though all is clear, but in fact there is more involved', and is characteristically used to make statements indicating some reservation, implying a 'but', 'expressing condition' and asserts something else to be said.

eg // 4 _^ I / know / John // (implication : '..... but I don't know anyone else')

His Tone 5 (rising-falling), is in contrast with Tone 4 phonetically and is, thus, in contrast in meaning : 'There may seem to be a doubt, but in fact, all is certain'.

eg // 5 That's / all there / is / to it //

Halliday's compound Tone₁₃ (falling plus low rising) and 5 3 (rising-falling plus low rising) are used when the tone groups are with double tonic, with the tonic marking new information, and there are two places where the speaker has decided to focus the information in the information unit. The two tonics are, however, not equal in value : the first tonic, with Tone 1 or Tone 5, is the

'major' one, the second, with Tone 3, is the 'minor' one. The major tonic carries the principal new information in the tone group whereas the second tonic expresses information which is in some way secondary or subsidiary to it,

eg // 4_A I / don't / think so // 13 Jane goes / shopping in town /
every Friday //

is the tone used to answer question 'Could Jane come round to our house on Friday, do you think?'

Here, 'Friday' is made into minor tonics as the implication is 'this has already been referred to', but it's a significant part of the message'.

As Brazil et al. (1980:18) emphasize the 'interactional explanation of the significance of tone', their choice of tone depends crucially on the 'speaker's assessment of the relationship between the message and the audience'. They recognize five tones, viz. fall, rise-fall, rise, fall-rise and level, and assert that the fall tone 'marks the matter (information) as new' and the fall-rise tone marks the experiential content of the tone unit, the matter, as part of the shared, already negotiated, common ground, occupied by the participants at a particular moment in an ongoing interaction'. (P14-15). In other words, the fall-rise tone, which they term 'referring' tone or r-tone, is used when the speaker is referring to matter presumably known to the listener, and the fall tone, which they term 'proclaiming' tone or p-tone, is employed when the speaker is proclaiming information or matter unknown to the listener at the time of the ongoing interaction. eg

(i) // r John'll be TWENTy // p in AUGgust //

(ii) // p John'll be TWENTy // r in AUGgust // (P 16)

The assumption in utterance (i) is that the listener is expected to know John's age but not his birthday, and the 'new' matter to be proclaimed is 'August', while conversely in utterance (ii), John's birthday but not his age is known to the listener, and the 'new' matter to be proclaimed is 'twenty'.

Brazil et al. claim that it is the speaker's choice whether to present information as already 'shared' or 'new', and the decision is normally based on a 'moment by moment' assessment of the communicative value of each part of each utterance. For instance, the alternation of the proclaiming and referring tone in utterances (i) and (ii) above

would reflect a different decision (on the speaker's part) about the listener's expectations ie whether he would be likely to be interested in John's age or when his birthday was.

For Brazil et al., the chief role of the other two tones ie the rise (r+) and the rise-fall (p+) tones which are variants of the referring and proclaiming tones respectively, are used to show the role-relationship between the speaker and the listener ie when the speaker wishes to assure a 'dominant' role or establish himself as 'controller' of events (P.91), and 'the matter of these tones is what the hearers are asked to remember.' (P.53) For instance, in reply to the question,

'Where's the dictionary?' the use of r+ tone
// r+ on the BOOKshelf // implies 'Don't you ever remember?'

A similar 'listener-control' role-specific significance applies to the use of p+ tone : apart from adding information to the 'common ground', the choice of p+ tone usually indicates 'surprise' and signals the speaker's 'own store of knowledge'. (P.55)

eg // p+ it's RAINing // (Implication: 'I also didn't know it was raining' and hence, 'I am surprised, disappointed etc.')

Their level tone, symbolized by 0, is neutral in the sense that it is neither proclaiming nor referring and is mainly used in reading prose,

eg // 0 in AUGust // p he'll be TWENTy // (P.88)

Having outlined Halliday, Crystal and Brazil's treatment of prosodic features, ie rhythm, tonic syllables, tone group and tones in English, it is perhaps appropriate, at the juncture, to state that Halliday's system was taken as a basis for analyzing the related features of the subjects' utterances in the main corpus. The reasons are: In my opinion,

- (a) Halliday's discussion on these suprasegmental features are, by far, most comprehensive and systematic;

- (b) the terms used to describe these features are clearly defined;
- (c) the system of analysis provides substantial guidelines for analyzing the subjects' utterances;
- (d) as far as tones are concerned, Brazil's system appears to be less complicated than Halliday's. However, there *is* more parallelism between Halliday's system and the subjects' than between Brazil's and that of the subjects. Moreover, Brazil's r+ and p+ tones are used when the speaker wishes to assume a 'dominant' role or establish himself as 'controller' of events. (See (iii) above) No such attitude was intended in the main corpus.
(See Chapter Five, S.5.3.8)

4.5.5.4 Intonation 'Errors' and Intelligibility

Very little research has been done on the effects of intonation errors on intelligibility. Without citing any example, Crystal and Davy (1975:7) claim that there are relatively few intonational differences between Spanish and English that will cause serious intelligibility problems, but since there is vast intonational differences between English and Japanese, it is not easy for English native speakers to understand Japanese spoken English.

Gumperz (1982:127) distinguishes the intonation patterns between Western English and Indian English without touching on their effects on intelligibility:

In Western English, tag questions will be set off from the question they follow — usually they'll be lower, sometimes higher (we're talking about the sort of the tag, not whether they rise or fall—distinguishing confirmation requests, semi-imperatives etc). In Indian English tag questions continue at the same level reached in the main question. Direct questions frequently are said with pitch rising steadily over the utterance:

➤ Did he leave his key at home?

➤ Where did he leave his key?

(See also S.4.5.9.1)

4.5.6 Rhythmic and Intonation Patterns of the Subjects Rhythmic Patterns of the Subjects

There is considerable diversity between RP and Malaysian English in the arrangement of the rhythmic units and the means by which they are marked.

4.5.6.1 Rhythmic Patterns of Chinese and Malay Subjects and their Influence on English

There are similar views on the rhythmic patterns of Chinese and Malay or Bahasa Malaysia:

- (a) Chao (1948:26), for instance, makes this claim on rhythm in Chinese:

Most Chinese dialects have a rhythm. similar to that of French, in which syllables succeed one another in a flat-footed fashion, except for enclitic particles.

Rhythm in Chinese is thus a feature of continuous speech which results from the distribution of long and short syllables and the unit of rhythm is based on the syllable, i.e. it is syllable-timed rhythm. The syllables recur at roughly regular intervals of time, whether stressed or unstressed and each syllable is approximately equal in duration.

Tay (1980 (b): 136) sees the transfer of most Singaporeans' L1, rhythm to Singapore English: 'Singapore English is spoken mainly with a syllable-timed rhythm and this "machine-gun" rhythm is characteristic of all natural speech, even among highly educated Singaporeans.' A similar appraisal can be found in Platt and Weber's (1980: 57) observation on Singapore and Malaysian English.

- (b) Ramish (1969: 117) voices similar views on rhythmic patterns of Malay: 'The unit of rhythm in Malay is the syllable, each syllable being given approximately the same amount of time in speaking.'

The sample of speakers in this study shows that apart from Subject 6 (Malay) whose rhythm was near stress-timed, all the other Chinese and Malay subjects used syllable-timed rhythm in their speech. eg

Int. One, Utt. 22 (Chinese)

// But / they / just / keep / bo / the / ring / us / la //

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

The segments marked 1, 2, 3 etc would take roughly the same time to utter. As each segment consists of one syllable, each syllable occurred at roughly equal intervals of time.

Like stress-timed rhythm which is not entirely regular, the sample also reveals that the subjects' syllable-timed rhythm was not totally regular either. Platt et al. (1984: 130) have a similar observation on speakers of French whose language is syllable-timed:

One has the overall impression that syllables come regularly one after the other until a longer syllable occurs at the end of a word group.

The overall impression one had in the sample was that stressed syllables tended to take slightly longer duration than the unstressed syllables, especially in polysyllabic words. For instance, in the example given above, the syllable in Segment 7 which was more prominent than the syllables in segments 5 and 6 in the word 'bothering' tended to take slightly longer intervals of time than the unstressed syllables in Segments 5 and 6. In the case of Chinese subjects, like French speakers, a longer syllable tended to occur at the end of a tone group. This could be due to the fact that the last content word (usually the last syllable) of a tone group in Chinese is usually slightly more prominent than the others. In addition, unstressed syllables were not uttered rapidly enough to catch up with the next stressed syllable as in RP and, hence, the beats produced ~~were~~ definitely quite different from those of RP.

4.5.6.2 Rhythmic Patterns of Indian Subjects and Their Influence on English

There are different views on the rhythmic patterns of Indian languages:

- (a) For Ramish (1969: 169,194), the outstanding feature of rhythm in Tamil is the 'rapidity of speech' :

The stress-timed rhythm of English is markedly different from the rapid-fire succession of Tamil syllables, which have a quantitative difference in vowel and consonant length. The tendency is for the Tamil speaker of English to speak very rapidly, interpreting English stress as lengthened consonants, putting weak stress on the first and last syllables, and exhibiting very little modulation of pitch. Words are run together in what sounds like a continuous stream. and the rapid rhythm gives Indian English its peculiar monotone staccato.

- (b) Platt, Weber and Ho (1984: 136) seem to support Bansal's (1978) concept of the rhythmic patterns of Indian English, which has been referred to as 'neither syllable-timed nor stress-timed'. They posit that 'presumably this was said because Indian English is not as strongly stress-timed as some native varieties of English. Indian languages do have accented syllables, although typically the position of the accented syllables is more regular than in English. The differences between stressed and unstressed syllables may be less than in English.'
- (c) Gumperz (1982: 123-4) claims that the striking feature in Indian English is 'the subdivision of utterances into small foot length chunks, the rhythmic marking by stress of several words with no syllable made tonally prominent.' He compares the rhythmic pattern of Western English with that of Indian English, giving this example:

Western English:

Do you`want a cup of tea, / or do you`want a cup of `coffee //

In each of the two clauses, the main verb and the object noun have 'prosodic prominence'. While each clause is smooth both 'rhythmically and intonationally, there are two sub-parts in the phrasing: "do you want" and "a cup of X". The last syllable in each of these rhythmic groups is highlighted.'

Indian English:

'Do you`want / a / cup of `tea / or / 'do you`want / a /
'cup of `coffee // (6)

Though the utterance falls into two main subunits, each is 'phrased in several parts'. Moreover, Gumperz claims that there seems to be prominence on 'do' and 'cup', and 'a' and 'or' seem to be treated as 'separate feet, so that there is a complete rhythmic break between the two main sense units and they are much more independent than English.'

- (d) Kachru (1969: 643), on the other hand, asserts that 'all the main South Asian languages are syllable-timed languages. This results in a distinct South Asian rhythm in South Asian English. This may be the reason for labelling South Asian English as a sing-song English, and for stating that it hampers intelligibility with L1 speakers of English.'

It was observed that the rhythmic patterns of the Indian subjects in this sample exhibited features described by Ramish, Platt and Gumperz. The words of the subjects were often 'run together like a continuous stream' and the rapid rhythm constituted a 'monotone staccato'. Moreover, as nearly all the words were weakly and evenly stressed (See S.4.5.4), the difference between stressed and unstressed syllables was not distinct, as in RP with stressed syllables falling in more regular positions. As a result, sometimes, rhythmic feet could only be marked by stress of several words, which constituted 'small foot length chunks' rhythm. Hence, to some extent, it may be right to say that Indian English is 'neither syllable-timed nor stress-timed' and in this study, the

team 'nonstress-timed' was used to describe the rhythm. eg

Int. Six, Utt. 11

// And nowadays / Kampar is under developing area // (2 feet)

4.5.6.3 Rhythmic 'Errors' of the Subjects and Intelligibility

As was mentioned in Section 4.5.1, there were so many ways of saying any utterance that hardly any effective methods could be used to measure errors at the suprasegmental level. The recorded RP speaker's version of saying some of the subjects' utterances, was however, taken as a 'standard' for measuring the subjects' errors as in the examples in the following sections.

Both Kachru(1969: 643) and Tay (1973: 6) claim that syllable-timed rhythm affected intelligibility, though hardly any research has been carried out. When discussing the syllable-timed rhythm of Singapore English, Tay claims that 'rhythm is not very easy to teach but it is worth teaching because it affects intelligibility.'

The sampling of the study, however, reveals that, generally speaking, both the syllable-timed and non-stress-timed rhythm of the subjects did not seem to affect intelligibility. Some examples are:

(a) Int. Two, Utt. 9 (Chinese)

// So // the / most / time / I / am / in / li / bra / ry //
be / cause / I / find / the / Eng / lish / book / ve / ry /
di / ffi / CULT //

RP speaker:

// So // the / most time I am in / LIbrary // because I / find
the / ENGLISH book / very difficult //

(// : tone group boundary; / : foot boundary; underlined:
salient syllables; capital letters : tonic syllables)

Chinese subject:

Number of tone groups: 3 (See S.4.5.7)

Number of feet: 23

Rhythm: syllable-timed

RP speaker

Number of tone groups: 3

Number of feet: 8

Rhythm: stress-timed

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated +h for all seven British listeners. (7)

(b) Int. Ten, Utt. 31 (Malay)

// there / are / some / cas / es / where / by / they / went / back /
to / pros / ti / tu / tion / also // be / cause / they /
had / been //

RP speaker:

// There are / some / CAses // whereby they went / back to prostiTution //
Also because they had been //

Malay subject

Number of tone groups: 3
Number of feet: 21
Rhythm: syllable-timed

RP speaker

Number of tone groups: 3
Number of feet: 6
Rhythm: stress-timed

Degree of intelligibility: The utterance was rated ++h for all seven listeners.

(c) Int. Six, Utt. 2, 3 (Indian)

// They ask where I come from // how many people in my family //

RP speaker:

// They / ask where I / COME from // how many / people in my /
FAMily //

Indian subject

Number of tone groups: 2
Number of feet: 2
Rhythm: non-stress-timed

RP speaker

Number of tone groups: 2
Number of feet: 6
Rhythm: stress-timed

Degree of intelligibility: The utterances were rated +h for all seven listeners.

Hence, it was quite evident that although rhythmic errors might deter native-speaker listeners from following the utterances with ease, they did not, on the whole, affect intelligibility substantially.

4.5.7 Tonality and Tonicity of the subjects' Speech

(1) Tonicity

In this sample, it was observed that while there were salient syllables in all the subjects' speech, no tonic syllables could be detected as there was hardly any syllable which was stressed significantly enough as to show sufficient pitch variation to be equivalent to the tonic syllables in RP.

Gumperz (1982: 121), for instance, posits that Western English listeners have difficulty in finding 'nuclear' syllables in Indian English because 'no syllables are stressed significantly more than any others' in connected speech.

For Ramish, (1969: 117), emphasis in Malay is 'signalled by word order and not by loudness or pitch change' and for Ross (5) sometimes particles are used for emphasis eg 'lah' denotes a wish or an assertion, 'kah' denotes asking, 'pun' denotes repetition etc. Thus, like Indians, no syllables in the Malay's speech is stressed significantly more than the others.

For Chao (1948: 42), in a Mandarin utterance, the last primary stressed syllables usually receives sentence stress, and may 'add loudness to increased pitch range and longer duration.'

In the case of the Chinese subjects, in some instances (See examples below), though the last content word of a tone group received slightly heavier stress than the others, it was usually the last syllable which was given heavier stress. Thus, it was in no way parallel to the tonic syllable in the tone group in RP which could fall on any word and on any syllable.

(ii) Tonicity 'Errors' and Intelligibility

Generally speaking, lack of tonic syllable and in the case of some of the utterances of the Chinese subjects, wrong word accent on the tonic word, did not cause intelligibility problems. eg

(a) Int. Ten, Utt. 30 (Malay)// Some of them // but not all // depend //

RP speaker:

// SOME of them // but not ALL // dePEND //Malay subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 3

Number of tone groups: 3

Salient syllables: some, not,
depend

Salient syllables: not

Tonic syllables: none

Tonic syllables: SOME, ALL
dePEND.Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated ++h for
all seven listeners.(b) Int. Eight, Utt. 11 (Indian)// Not absolutely // most of the programmes in RTM are
local programmes //RP speaker:// Not ABSolutely // MOST of the programmes in RTM are local
programmes //Indian subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 2

Number of tone groups: 2

Salient syllables: not, most,
programmesSalient syllables: programmes,
RTM, local,
programmes.

Tonic syllables: none

Tonic syllables: ABSolutely,
MOSTDegree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated ++h
for all seven listeners.(c) Int. Two, Utt. 9 (Chinese)// So // the most time I am in library // because I
find the English book very difficULT //

RP speaker

// So// the most time I am in Library // because I find
the ENGLISH book very difficult //

Chinese subject

Number of tone groups: 3
Salient
syllables: so, most,
library, find,
book.
Tonic syllable: wrong tonic
word and wrong word
stress: 'difficult'

RP speaker

Number of tone groups: 3
Salient
syllables: most, find,
very, difficult.
Tonic syllables: So,
Library, ENGLISH

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated +h
for all seven listeners.

(iii) Tonality

Like RP, the subjects' utterances could be divided into tone groups and, on the whole, the division corresponded to that of RP. However, as no tonic syllables were detectable in the subjects' utterances, tone group division was based on perceivable 'pauses' between groups of words which could be a phrase, a clause, a sense unit (8) or a sentence. In some cases, utterances were perceived to have broken up into more tone groups or fewer tone groups than one would expect of an RP speaker.

(iv) Tonality 'Errors' and Intelligibility

It was observed that whereas too few tone group division might cause some intelligibility problems, too many tone groups (provided that the tone groups were made up of a sense unit or group) would not, eg

Too few tone groups

(a) Int. Eight, Utt. 9, 10 (Indian)

// Its difference is in TV3 programmes they are putting
interesting programmes //

RP speaker

// Its difference is in TV3 programmes // they are putting
INteresting programmes //

Indian subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 1

Number of tone groups: 2

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated
 ++h for three listeners, -h for three listeners and
 --h for one listener.

(b) Int. Ten, Utt. 24 (Malay)

// helping those underage arrested by police// when
 they caught in hotels and so on //

RP speaker

// helping those UNderage // arrested by poLICE // when
 they CAUGHT in hotels and so on //

Malay subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 2

Number of tone groups: 3

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated -h
 for all seven listeners.

(c) Int. One, Utt. 25 (Chinese)

// I minor in Management I will minor in Management//

RP speaker

// I minor in MANagement // I will MINor in MANagement //

Chinese subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 1

Number of tone groups: 2

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated ++h
 for three listeners and --h for four listeners.

Too many tone groups

(a) Int. Nine, Utt. 3 (Chinese)

// And then the population is now // I think // two
hundred thousand //

RP speaker

// And then the population is now I think two hundred
THOUsand //

Chinese subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 3

Number of tone groups: 1

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated ++h
for all seven listeners.

(b) Int. Nine, Utt. 4 (Chinese)

// And consist of // I think // fifty per cent of
Malay // forty per cent of Chinese // and the ten
per cent is INDIAN //

RP speaker

// And consist of I think fifty per cent of MaLAY // forty
per cent of ChinESE // and then ten per cent is INDian //

Chinese subjectRP speaker

Number of tone groups: 5

Number of tone groups: 3

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated +h
for all seven listeners.

4.5.8 Other Related Features

(i) Absence of Contracted Forms

In RP, contracted forms of verbs, especially auxiliary verbs,
are used when they are unstressed. It was a common feature
of all the subjects not to use contracted forms of verbs
whether they were stressed or unstressed. eg

(a) Int. Ten, Utt. 19 (Malay)

Previously, I am doing just in the aid section.
(instead of 'I'm')

(b) Int. Three, Utt. 3 (Chinese)

There is a river la. (Instead of 'There's')
(Instead of 'There is')

(c) Int. Three, Utt. 13 (Chinese)

...then cannot speak English very well. (Instead of 'can't')
(Instead of 'cannot')

Very occasionally, some contracted forms were used. eg

- (a) Int. One, Utt. 23 (Chinese)

I haven't think of it.

- (b) Int. Ten, Utt. 3 (Malay)

I think I don't like it.

(ii) Absence of Weak Forms

As Gimson (1970: 263) points out, many function or form words in RP have 'two or more qualitative and quantitative patterns according to whether they are unaccented (as is usual) or accented (in special situations or when said in isolation). As compared with the accented realizations of these words (the 'strong' forms), the unaccented ('weak' form) varieties of these words show reductions of the length of sounds, obscuration of vowels towards /ə, I, v/ and the elision of vowels and consonant.'

Apart from the word 'the' of which the weak form /ðə/ was used, regardless of whether it was followed by a vowel or a consonant and the weak form of the word 'a' /ə/, no other weak forms could be heard in the sample. eg

- (a) Int. Ten, Utt. 30 (malay)

Some of [bʌf] them [dem] but [bʌt] not all, instead of:
Some of [əv, v, ə] them [ðəm, əm, m] but [bət] not all.

- (b) Int. Ten, Utt. 35 (Malay)

So very difficult for [fɔ:] them [dem] to [tu:] survive
instead of:
So very difficult for [fə] them [ðəm, əm, m] to [tə]
survive.

(iii) Absence of Liaison

In RP, it is usual in connected speech for the linking /r/ forms of words to be used before a vowel. eg father and son ['fɑ:ðə_r and sʌn]. It is also usual for a word final consonant to be carried over as initial in a word beginning with a vowel, eg

look out [lv'kavt]. (Gimson, 1970: 299)

In the sample, there was a general lack of liaison between words which resulted in rhythmic break between words, forming an overall 'choppy', 'staccato' rhythm. eg

(a) Int. Three, Utt. 11 (Chinese)

Because I am very poor in [p̄vɤ in] English la.,
instead of

Because I'm very poor in [pvərɪn] English la.

(b) Int. Ten, Utt. 29 (Malay)

We must talk about [tɔkəbavt] religious things and
so on and must make full use of [fvɪ ju:s ɒf] them,
instead of

We must talk about [tɔ: kəbavt] religious things and
so on and must make full use of [fvɪ lju: sɒv] them.

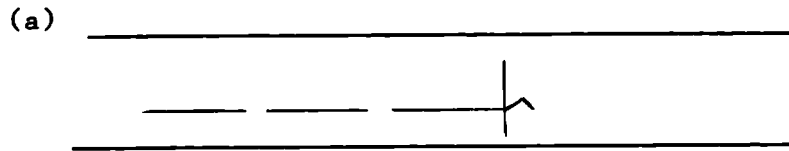
It was apparent that the features mentioned above did not interfere with intelligibility. All the examples used for illustration had very high degrees of intelligibility.

4.5.9 Tones of the Subjects' Speech

4.5.9.1 Tones in Malay

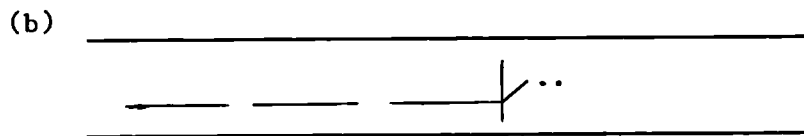
Ramish (1969: 117-119) identifies three functional categories of intonation in Malay ie rhythmic intonation, syntactic intonation and paralinguistic intonation (not analyzed) and claims that each of these intonation types employs the same 5 tones, viz. High level tone (Tone 3), Mid level tone (Tone 2), Low level tone (Tone 1), Falling tone (Tone 4), Rising tone (Tone 5).

Rhythmic intonation: The rhythmic modulation of spoken Malay is not associated with meaning, either inherent or superimposed. A declarative sentence least marked for shades of meaning can be said to be composed of a succession of level tones with a falling tone on the final syllable immediately preceded by a higher tone. This may be represented diagrammatically as:

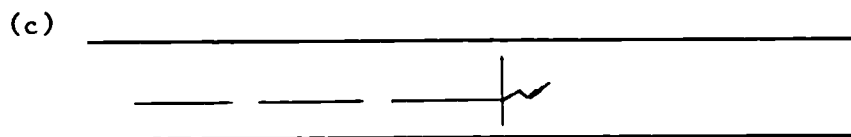


Syntactic intonation: In delineating clauses and marking sentence types, syntactic intonation superimposes additional meaning upon the inherent lexical meaning of the utterance. eg

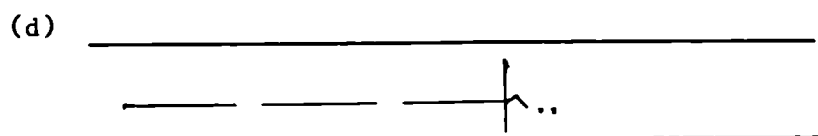
Clause marker: In utterances composed of more than one clause, a high tone (Tone 3) followed by a pause (..) marked the end of a clause, and may be represented diagrammatically as:



Sentence marker: A declarative sentence is marked by a falling tone on the last syllable immediately preceded by a higher tone, and may be represented diagrammatically as in (a). An interrogative sentence which elicits a yes-no response has the same form as a declarative sentence, but is marked by a rising intonation on the last syllable. This may be represented diagrammatically as:



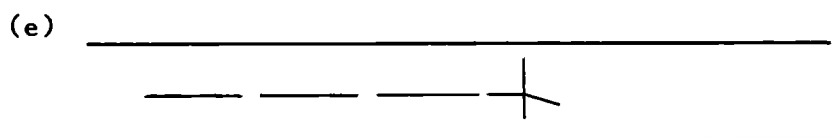
An interrogative sentence which seeks confirmation of a statement is expressed by the declarative form of the statement with declarative intonation followed by a pause, and may be represented diagrammatically as:



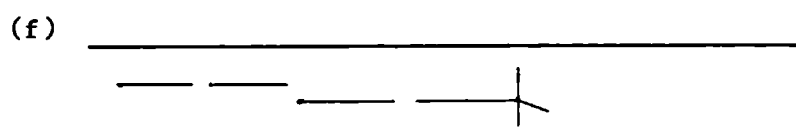
4.5.9.2 Tones in Chinese

Very little is known about Chinese intonation. As Chao (1970: 40-42) points out, the main problem is that intonation features in Chinese are 'almost inextricably combined with the tonal and stress features of syllables in speech, and it is not easy to state precisely where the one ends and the other begins.' He, however, recognizes several intonation patterns which are, in some way, related to those of RP. (P. 812-814) They are:

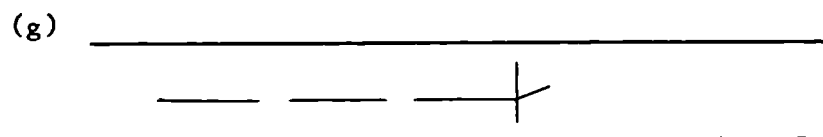
- (i) Normal Intonation: It is used in ordinary declarative statements. There is no special intonation modification but there is a slight tendency for the pitch to fall towards the end of the statement. This may be represented as:



- (ii) Suspense-Conclusion Intonation: A phrase or a first clause in a composite sentence is on a slightly higher pitch level than a concluding phrase or clause. This may be represented diagrammatically as:



- (iii) Accelerated Tempo towards the end of a sentence: It is used in simple questions and commands in which there is no special implication, and may be represented diagrammatically as:



4.5.9.3 Tones in Tamil

Very little concerning intonation in Tamil appears to have been documented. Ramish (1969: 194), for instance, only states that the pitch pattern of Tamil is 'dominated by low and mid pitches, high occurring usually in syllables preceding half pause and marked by rising terminal. Mid occurs mainly on post-pausal syllables having primary stress or on syllables unmarked by stress. Although there is much alternation between pitches 1 and 2, there are long sequences which are on the same level.'

Gumperz (1982: 120-121), on the other hand, observes that in Indian English, simple sentences are divided into several 'prosodic pieces corresponding to English phrase rather than clause length units. Each of these has relatively level pitch on the central information carrying items. eg

Western English

John is reading a book

Indian English

John is reading a book.

He claims that there are 'sharp boundaries between the pieces', which are 'achieved by a sharp fall after a level syllable occurring on unstressed item 'is', 'a' with the pitch then rising somewhat more gradually to become level again on the next stressed item. Thus there is a succession of level tones, each of which is higher in pitch than the immediately preceding environment.'

4.5.9.4 Differing Intonation Patterns of the Subjects and Intelligibility

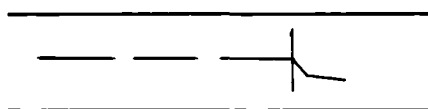
Intonation in English is a very complicated suprasegmental phenomenon. Different linguists recognise different tones or tunes for different types of utterances. O'Connor (1961), for instance, identifies six tunes to be used in ten different Tone Groups, with numerous exceptions. Hence, there is, in fact, no measure of 'errors' as far as intonation is concerned.

Whether or not the subjects carried over the intonation patterns of their L1 to speaking English will not be discussed. However, basically, it could be observed that the subjects used four tones in their utterances ie falling, high-rising, low rising and level

tone (0). In the case of the Malay subjects, a fifth tone, ie rise-fall (the pitch movement occurred on the last syllable of the last word of a tone group) was sometimes used. These tones were, in fact, not identical to those of RP. There was a tendency for the subjects to use a succession of level tones with a falling or rising tone towards the end or on the final syllable of an utterance. They started with a lower pitch (especially the Malays and Indians) than that of RP. Thus, if we disregard elements such as pitch level, which is very difficult to determine, there is some parallelism between the subjects' intonation patterns and those described by Halliday.

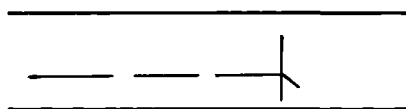
Generally speaking, the subjects used falling tone (parallel to Halliday's Tone 1) for declarative clauses to indicate complete simple statement and clauses stating new information.

H's Tone 1



(H: Halliday)

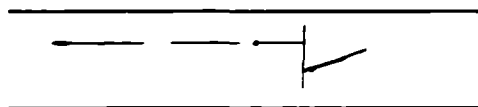
Ss' Tone 1



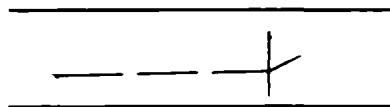
(S: Subject)

High-rising tone (parallel to Halliday's Tone 2) was normally used for both WH and yes-no questions.

H's Tone 2

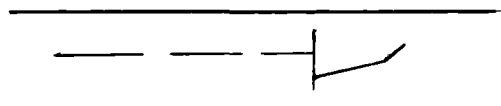


Ss' Tone2

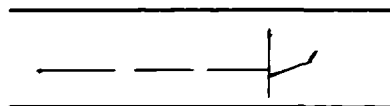


Low-rising tone (parallel to Halliday's Tone 3) was used for 'unfinished' statements or something already known to the listener.

H's Tone 3

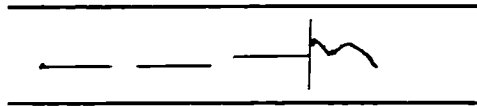


Ss' Tone 3



The Malay subjects sometimes used rising-falling tone (parallel to Halliday's Tone 5) for 'unfinished' statements.

'H's Tone 5



Ss' Tone 5



It has to be pointed out that the use of such tones among the subjects were, nevertheless, not consistent. There were cases where falling or even level tones instead of low-rising tones were used for unfinished statements. Whatever the differences in intonation between the subjects' utterances and that of the RP speaker might be, there were no instances when misunderstanding occurred. Some examples are:

- (a) Int. Six, Utt. 11, 12 (Indian)

//₃ And nowadays Kampar is under developing area //₃ and there a lot of projects //₃ housing projects //

RP speaker

//₁ And nowadays Kampar is under developing Area //₃ and there are a lot of PROjects //₁ HOUSing projects //

Degree of intelligibility: both the utterances were rated ++h for all seven listeners.

- (b) Int. Six, Utt. 2, 3 (Indian)

//₀ They ask where I come from //₀ how many people in my family //

RP speaker

//₃ They ask where I COME from //₃ how many people in my FAMily //

Degree of intelligibility: the utterances were rated +h for all seven listeners.

- (c) Int. Ten, Utt. 12 (Malay)

//₁ A bit slower in Kedah //₁ if compared to K.L. //

..

RP speaker

//₃ A bit slower in KEdah //₁ if compared to K.L. //

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated ++h for all seven listeners

(d) Int. Ten, Utt. 30 (Malay)

//₁ Some of them //₁ but not all //₁ depend //

RP speaker

//₃ SOME of them //₃ but not ALL //₁ dePEND //

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated +h for all seven listeners.

(e) There was, however, some uncertainty when a different tone was expected in tag question:

Int. Ten, Utt. 30 (Malay)

//₁ Everything has to rush in //₂ is it //

RP speaker:

//₃ Everything has to RUsh in //₁ IS it //

Degree of intelligibility: the utterance was rated +h for four listeners and h for three listeners.

In a word, on the whole, differences in intonation and rhythmic patterns did not seem to affect intelligibility. Lack of tonic syllables, too, did not cause any intelligibility problems. Whereas too few tone groups might cause some intelligibility problems, too many would not, provided that tone groups were made up of sense group.

In this chapter, I have discussed the segmental and suprasegmental features of the subjects that affected and did not affect intelligibility for the British listeners. In the next chapter, I shall touch on the syntactic and lexical errors of the subjects that may or may not affect intelligibility for the same listeners.

NOTES

- (1) The name given to the regionally neutral accent in British English historically deriving from the prestige speech of the Court and the public schools. The term indicates that its prestige is the result of social factors, not linguistic ones. RP is in no sense linguistically superior or inferior to other accents; but it is the accent which tends to be associated with the more well-educated parts of society, and is the one most often cited as a norm for the description of British English, or in teaching that dialect to foreigners. The BBC originally adopted RP for its announcers because it was the form of pronunciation most likely to be nationally understood, and to attract least regional criticism - hence the association of RP with the phrase 'BBC English'. These days, the BBC, as indeed educated speech at large, displays considerable regional variation, and many modified forms of RP exist. RP no longer has the prestigious social position it once held. In the eyes of many (especially of the younger generations), regionally marked forms of accent are more desirable. (Crystal, 1980: 296-297). In this study, (Gimson's (1970) phonetic symbols were used as a criteria for pronunciation in RP. (See Appendix C (1))
- (2) The underlined words gave important contextual clues to the intelligibility of the mispronounced words.
- (3) 'Accent' and 'stress': 'accent' is not solely a matter of loudness but also of pitch and duration, especially 'pitch' eg the verb 'record' in 'I'm going to record the tune' and the noun in 'I've got a record', the contrast in word accent between 'record' and 'record' is made by the syllables differing in loudness, length and pitch movement. A similar use of these variables is found in the notion of sentence accent. eg. 'He was wearing a red hat' could be heard as a response to 'was he wearing a red coat?' whereas 'He was wearing a red hat' would respond to 'was he wearing a green hat?'. The term stress, however, is often used for contrasts of this kind, as in the phrases 'word stress' and 'contrastive stress'. (Crystal, 1980: 8). In this study, the term 'word stress' instead of 'word accent' was used.
- (4) Tay (1982(a):61) distinguishes the stress patterns of Singapore

English, with predominantly Chinese speakers whose speech is, in many respects, similar to Malaysian English (See Platt and Weber: 1980), from those of RP in the five different ways.

- (5) From Linguaphone: Miniature Language Series: Malay edited by D. Ross, A.L. James and C.O. Blagdon, the Linguaphone Institute, 24-27 High Holborn, London WC1.
- (6) Gumperz (1982: xii): Prosodic notation: 'pitch register shift, upwards.
- (7) For degrees of intelligibility, see Chapter Three S.3.5. and Table 3.5.
- (8) Sense groups or units: groups of words which contribute to the situation in which we are placed at a given moment. They are usually separated from each other by pauses, though on occasion these pauses may be suppressed.
(O'Connor, 1961: 3)

CHAPTER FIVE

INTELLIGIBILITY AND ERRORS AT THE SYNTACTIC AND LEXICAL LEVELS

For the past ten years or so, there has been a considerable change in focus in research related to error analysis. While earlier studies concentrated on (i) the significance, source and cause of learners' errors eg. Corder (1967), Jain (1974), with the aim of verifying that learners' errors did not stem from L1 interference as contrastive analysis researchers such as James (1980), Nemser (1971) claimed, but that they were the learners' own strategies of learning; (ii) types and frequency of errors eg Richards (1971, 1974), Burt and Kiparsky (1972, 1975) with the aim of discovering the linguistic and communicative strategies of the learner. More recent work has drawn attention to measuring native speakers' responses to learner errors by determining which types of error interfere with intelligibility or are irritating or unacceptable to the listener or reader. The majority of these studies see errors in relative rather than absolute terms and the native speakers' judgements generate a certain hierarchy of error. In this Chapter, syntactic and lexical errors in the main corpus will be measured in terms of degrees of intelligibility to ascertain error gravity and the findings will be compared with those in the recent research. (See S.5.1.1 and 5.1.2).

5.1. Recent Studies on Error Gravity at the Syntactic and Lexical Levels

Various methods have been used in conducting experiments related to error gravity and most studies have been limited to sentence level analysis. Moreover, some of these studies used artificially created sample sentences to illustrate what learners might say or write rather than using real examples from L2 learners' spontaneous speech or writing eg. Johansson (1957) Sahgal (1985) etc. Such procedures have their limitations as they allow maximum control of the variables that may affect intelligibility. Others collected L2 learners' speech or writing, but the analysis is mainly limited to certain grammatical errors. eg James (1977), Huges (1982) etc.

5.1.1 Recent Research on Error Gravity in Indo-European Languages

Some of the recent studies on error gravity have been conducted with adults learning Indo-European languages. eg Guntermann (1978) and Chastain (1980) for adults learning Spanish, Politzer (1978) for adults learning German and Piazza (1980) for adults learning French: Chastain required native speakers to rate sentences as comprehensible

and acceptable, comprehensible but unacceptable, or simply incomprehensible, Politzer investigated which of an erroneous sentence pair was the more serious violation; Guntermann regarded miscomprehension as a signal of error gravity while Piazza gauged the native speakers' judgement of irritation on erroneous sentences.

Regardless of what tasks were required of the native-speaker judges, there seems to be a general agreement among these studies that article omission or substitution and errors in noun-adjective agreement received greater acceptance than errors in verb forms and tense usage, while lexical errors especially those which were directly related with grammatical errors greatly impeded intelligibility.

Both Chastain and Guntermann found that the overall intelligibility of the sample was quite high. However, judges had great difficulty in interpreting sentences with incorrect or omitted content words or sentences with multiple errors. Guntermann further noted that 'the sentence that contained two errors of the same sub-type were much more difficult to understand than those that had multiple errors of different kinds.' (P.251) Piazza concluded that 'incorrect word order in French is relatively not irritating but can be a problem for comprehension.' (P.424) Similarly, Politzer also found that German judges considered incorrect word order to be a serious error, (P.257) which affected comprehension. (cf findings in S.5.3)

5.1.2 Recent Research on Error Gravity in the English Language

Several studies have investigated the reactions of English native speakers toward the errors produced by L2 learners of English at both sentence and discourse levels. However, some of these studies were limited to native speakers' reaction to certain grammatical items only. For example, Tomiyana's (1980) study was limited to assessing the reaction of native speakers toward three types of errors viz omission, insertion and wrong choice on two grammatical items, ie articles and connectors. The results revealed that wrong choice in connectors was easier to correct than omission, resulting in the difficulty ordering of omission, wrong choice and insertion. However, for articles, the results were not significant enough to determine the difficulty rank of omission. The author concluded that in order to accurately determine the hierarchy of errors in terms of communication breakdown, 'it is necessary to consider not only the grammatical items themselves but also how the students make errors

with them..... the variable type of error was more important than grammatical item'. (P75-76).

Olsson (1978) only concentrated on the English speakers' ability to understand deviant passive sentences produced by Swedish learners. She found the hierarchy of error gravity, from most to least intelligible, as follows:

- (i) Sentences with one or two syntactic errors, (ii) sentences with lexical errors, (iii) sentences with semantic and syntactic errors and, (iv) contextually incongruous sentences involving both semantic and syntactic errors (P85).

In other words, she discovered that, on the whole, syntactic errors hinder communication to a lesser degree than semantic errors. For her, it was easy to interpret a syntactic error if it occurred in the auxiliary or in the main verb or in both; however, if the main verb deviated in 'a lexical way', the utterance was a little more difficult to interpret and if the utterances were contextually incorrect, they were most difficult to interpret.

Other studies explore a wider range of errors at the syntactic and lexical levels. James (1977), for instance, collected about one hundred writing errors committed by foreign learners of English and selected fifty sentences which fell neatly into these ten categories: tense, negation, order, concord, transformation, lexis (noun), lexis (verb), lexis (adjective), lexis (preposition) and articles. Twenty native speakers and twenty non-native speakers were asked to rate the sentences on a five-point scale : '5' indicated 'very serious' errors, '1', 'least serious' errors and '4', '3', and '2', intermediate degrees of seriousness. The results showed that native speakers viewed errors in 'tense' and 'concord' as most serious and non-native speakers considered errors related to 'case' and 'lexis' most serious, which suggests that native speakers could tolerate lexical errors more readily than non-native speakers but were not lenient with errors related to verbs. An overall analysis of the results, however, indicated that the most serious error types were in the descending order: transformation, tense, concord, case, negation, articles, order and the least were those related to lexical errors. For examples, the 'transformation error' in the sentence, 'How you say it in English' was considered most serious and the lexical error (preposition) in the sentence, 'The time in my watch is 6.30' was regarded least serious (P117).

Hughes and Lascaraton's (1982) investigation of the judgement of error gravity, in some ways, parallels that of James (1977).

Thirty-two sentences taken from Greek students' composition were selected to provide four instances of errors in each of the following eight broad categories, viz vocabulary, preposition, pronoun, plural, word order, concord, verb forms (other than concord) and spelling. Corrections were made so that each sentence contained only one error. Three groups of judges ie ten Greek teachers of English, ten native-speakers of English and ten non-teachers, all of whom were English native speakers, were asked to rate the sentences on a five-point scale identical to the one used by James. It was found that the hierarchy of error gravity differed from one group to another: The non-teachers' judgement of error gravity depended almost exclusively on the criteria of intelligibility eg. they viewed some spelling errors which created lexical confusion (eg 'brought' for 'broad', 'surious' for 'curious' rather than 'serious') as most likely to cause unintelligibility and regarded vocabulary errors as the second most serious error. The Greek teachers made reference to the 'basicness' of the rules infringed as most serious errors. eg. verb form, concord and plural, while the English teachers based their judgements on both criteria, but showed some preference for that of intelligibility and regarded errors in pronouns, vocabulary and verb forms as serious errors.

Vann et al (1984) surveyed English native speakers' response to certain common ESL writing errors by using a questionnaire asking for responses to thirty-six sentences containing errors of various types on a five-point acceptability scale with '1' being most tolerable and '5', least tolerable errors. Twelve types of errors were selected to be investigated: Spelling (two types), articles, common splice (ie connecting two complete sentences with a comma), prepositions, pronoun agreement, subject-verb agreement, word choice, relative clauses, tense, it-deletion and word order. Spelling - 1 included examples (one British and one colloquial) of spelling varieties that differ from standard American spelling, while spelling - 2 included errors, such as deletion and substitution. It was found that word order errors were viewed as least acceptable and spelling - 1 errors most acceptable. It was also discovered that errors related to prepositions, pronoun agreement and subject-verb agreement were not only less obviously rule-governed but were also less likely to interfere with intelligibility whereas the

least acceptable errors such as word order, it-deletion, tense, relative clause errors and word choice would generally interfere with intelligibility.

Johansson (1975) constructed his own set of sentences containing errors which he felt might have been made by Swedish learners of English ie errors in verb complementation, errors in agreement (concord) and word order errors. Using university students as judges, he found that errors of verb complementation caused the highest irritation.

Sahgal and Agnihotri (1985), on the other hand, asked forty-two educated Indian informants to rate twenty-three sentences with deviances which he considered characteristics of Indian English on three scales: 'Wrong English', 'Good enough for informal use', and 'Good English'. The following hierarchy of acceptability was established: (i) the least acceptable deviations were those related to complex sentence formation, tag-question and word order; (ii) the some-what acceptable deviations were those related to verb, number restrictions on nouns and, (iii) the most acceptable deviations were those related to collocational restrictions, the use of particles and prepositions. In other words, the most acceptable deviations were, in general, related to the lexical level while the least acceptable deviations were those related to the level of syntax and the 'somewhat acceptable' ones were mainly those related to the morphological level. The findings, in some ways, contradict those of Olsson (1977).

The studies cited so far used either created sample sentences or sample sentences collected from L2 learners' speech or writing. They consisted of single sentences with errors in vocabulary and grammar. It is evident from these studies that the hierarchy of error gravity differs from one to another, depending on the types of error chosen, the classification of error types and the criteria upon which the judgement was based. Perhaps Albrechtsen (1980:365-396) is right in concluding that a search for a hierarchy of error gravity is fruitless because "all errors are equally irritating.... irritation is directly predictable from the number of errors regardless of error types or other linguistic aspect". Nevertheless, some of the errors which Piazza, Chastian, Guntermann, Politzer, Olsson and Vann identified that interfered with and did not interfere with intelligibility correspond with those 'local' and 'global' errors identified by Burt and Kiparsky (1972, 1975).

In order to determine the relative importance of error types, Burt and Kiparsky selected sentences with two or more errors committed by EFL learners from all over the world, taken from tape-recordings of spontaneous conversations and written composition and letters. Native speakers of English were asked to make judgements about the relative comprehensibility of a sentence as each error was corrected, one at a time or several at a time. They came to the conclusion that two types of errors could be identified: 'global' errors were those errors which violated 'overall sentence organization' eg. word order, sentence connectors and other areas of syntax that were crucial to the organization of ideas in an utterance, and this type of errors generally caused the listener or reader to misinterpret the speaker's or writer's message. On the other hand, 'local' errors were those errors that affected a single element or constituent of a sentence eg. articles, auxiliaries and the formation of quantifiers, and this type of error did not usually hinder communication significantly. They also extended the classification of 'global' and 'local' error distinction in terms of those that sound more 'un-English' to a listener or reader than the others. The distinction, though very systematic and sound, has its own limitations. As they themselves admitted, some local errors might cause intelligibility problems eg word omission or lexical errors. Thus, sometimes, there is no clear distinction between these two types of errors. Moreover, being limited by the sample collected, the analysis only rests on the single sentence level. Other factors such as incoherence, pausal phenomena etc at discourse level which may affect intelligibility are overlooked.

In an ordinary communication situation, a native speaker need not hear everything in order to understand what a learner of English says and thus, generally pays no attention to unimportant elements which are irrelevant to the message. Hence, in connected speech such as a dialogue or an oral interview, a deviant lexical item can often be correctly interpreted by using contextual clues. Albrechtsen et al (1980) studied some extracts of interviews conducted in English with Danish learners of English and found that the ratio of wrong content words to the total number of words was insignificant and did not seriously affect communication. Among other findings (See Chapter Two, S.2.5.2.6) they also concluded that coherence was an important factor

for intelligibility as they found that hesitation phenomena, pauses and restructurings and self-corrections constituted serious problems for the listener 'who has started decoding one structure and is forced to start decoding a new structure' (P390). They also found that since false starts and empty pauses drew too much of the listener's attention from the content to the form of the message, they caused irritation. (See also S.5.3.5).

5.2. Criteria for Evaluating Syntactic and Lexical Errors in the Main Corpus and their Effects on Intelligibility

The evaluation of errors in foreign languages is closely related with the goals of foreign language teaching. As Quirk (1968:109) points out, 'comprehensibility' and 'conformity' are two such goals. If the goal is comprehensibility, the types of error which make utterances difficult or impossible to understand should be regarded as more serious than others. On the other hand, if the goal is conformity, errors should be evaluated regardless of their effects on communication. For the purpose of this study, the former goal is relevant and error gravity is based on the errors committed by the subjects in the oral interviews graded on the five-point intelligibility rating scale, (See S.5.2.4).

5.2.1 Definition of Syntactic and Lexical Errors

By 'error', I refer to any deviation from standard British English, regardless of what the characteristics or causes might be. (Subject to some exceptions: see below). Syntactic errors included all formal errors ie errors concerning grammatical rules, forms of words and sentence structure. Sentence structures which are acceptable in spoken English were, however, not treated as errors eg. 'Just a Malay village la. Very small'. (Int. Three, Utt.2: Omission of 'It's'). Lexical errors included errors related to lexis ie wrong word choice. However, fillers such as 'la' etc were not considered errors but features of ME. Lexis related to 'code-switching' was also considered a feature of ME and was discussed under a separate heading.

5.2.2 Grouping of Syntactic and Lexical Errors

All syntactically and lexically erroneous utterances produced by the subjects in the main corpus were listed in Appendixes E(1) and E (2). As far as possible, similar syntactic and lexical errors were grouped together. Syntactically erroneous utterances mostly rated +h and those mostly rated -h and --h were listed in separate

ables. Syntactically and lexically correct utterances, including those wrongly heard and which could not be interpreted by the British listeners were not included and will be discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. The division and numbering of the utterances were the same as those in Appendix A (2).

5.2.3 Classification of Syntactic Error Types

Syntactic errors committed by L2 learners can be numerous. It is, therefore, unwise to classify error types before specific types of errors can be identified. Some researchers classify errors in a comparative taxonomy based on a comparison between the structure of L2 errors and certain other types of constructions, yielding two major error categories: (i) developmental errors ie errors similar to those made by children learning the target language as their first language, and (ii) interlingual errors ie errors similar in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language.eg Richards (1974). Others classify errors according to their linguistic features.eg Burt and Kiparsky (1972). The first type of error classification is not required at this stage of research and my own classification of error types required eighteen broad grammatical categories (Table 5.1).

About sixty types of grammatical errors could be identified in the main corpus. However, for the convenience of analysis and rating, they were grouped into eighteen categories. Error types 1 to 5 were concerned with errors related to verb forms; error types 6 to 9 were concerned with errors related to subject or object of the utterances; error types 10 to 13 were errors related to parts of speech other than verbs; error type 14, termed 'miscellaneous' were errors which only occurred once in the entire sample; error types 15 to 18 were concerned with errors at phrase, clause or sentence level. It should be pointed out that the omission of -ed for regular past tense or past participle was not included as an error because the subjects never pronounced the -ed verb inflection [t] or [d], even if they meant to and it was found not to interfere with intelligibility. (See Appendix E (1) and E (2)).

Table 5.1. Classification of Syntactic error types

Error Type	Grammatical Category
1	Omission/addition of main verb or auxiliary verb
2	Wrong tense
3	Wrong past participle
4	Misformation of verbs in passive
5	Wrong sequence of tense
6	Omission of dummy subject 'it' and/or + 'verb'; misuse of 'it is' and 'there are'.
7	Omission/addition of subject or object
8	Omission/addition of subject pronoun
9	Subject-verb concord
10	Singular/plural agreement; wrong plural
11	Omission/addition of preposition; misuse of preposition
12	Omission/addition of adverb or conjunction; misuse of adverb or conjunction
13	Omission/addition of articles; misuse of articles
14	Miscellaneous: errors which occurred only once in the main corpus, eg 'wrong negation', wrong tag-question', 'wrong possessive construction; 'past participle' for 'present participle' etc
15	Phrases that need restructuring
16	UnEnglish or nonstandard expressions
17	Wrong word order (including misplacement of connectors)
18	'Incoherent' elements: utterances with incoherent elements such as hesitation phenomena, eg pauses, restructuring, self-correction, unnecessary repetition of words, stutter, tongue slips and false starts etc.

Examples of each error type (E.T.)a) Int. One, Utt. 18

When I [^]visiting my relatives. (Omission of auxiliary verb 'was': E.T.1)

b) Int. Ten, Utt. 21

And after that I am doing the juvenile cases (Wrong tense 'am':E.T.2)

c) Int. One, Utt. 23

Oh, I haven't think of it. (Wrong past participle 'think': E.T.3)

d) Int. Ten, Utt. 24

.... when they caught in hotels. (Misformation of verb 'caught' in passive:E.T. 4)

e) Int. Three, Utt. 17

.....what I see and what I heard. (Wrong sequence of tense
'see' and 'heard': E.T.5)

f) Int. Two, Utt. 6

Sometimes [^]very difficult. (Omission of 'it is': E.T.6)

g) Int. Nine, Utt.10

Most of the time [^]go to 'tanjung' (Omission of subject, 'I':E.T.7)

h) Int. Four, Utt. 6

Muar they got, they got..... (Addition of subject pronoun 'they':
E.T.8)

i) Int. Nine, Utt. 6

Muar don't have..... (Lack of subject-verb agreement 'Muar' and
'don't' : E.T.9)

j) Int. Five, Utt. 13

May be one to six month. (Lack of Singular/Plural agreement, 'six
and 'month': E.T.10)

k) Int. Six, Utt. 26

So we cannot comment anything about that. (Wrong preposition, 'about'
E.T.11)

l) Int. Ten, Utt. 41

I think children section is more interesting rather than prostitution.
(Addition of adverb 'rather': E.T.12)

m) Int. Four, Utt. 13

This is [^]first time I have been..... (Omission of article 'the':
E.T. 13)

n) Int. Eight, Utt. 17

Four of us, included me ('Past participle' for 'present participle':
E.T.14)

o) Int. Five, Utt. 9

I think I want to do my future study in my master. (The underlined
phrase needed restructuring ie to do 'a Master's degree in the
future': E.T. 15)

p) Int. Nine, Utt. 14

But the seaside campare to the Penang One (UnEnglish expression,
'the Penang One' : E.T.16)

q) Int. Four, Utt. 7

Can, can said, can be, can said it very known in Malaysia la.
(Wrong word order and incoherent elements: E.T. 17 and 18)

5.2.4. Degrees of Intelligibility

The same principle used to devise the five-point intelligibility rating scale in Chapter Three was applied to rate the syntactic errors. However, since syntactically correct utterances were not included, only four degrees of intelligibility were identified and only the seven British listeners' interpretation was taken into account.

Table 5.2. Intelligibility rating scale for syntactic errors

Degree	Specification of degree of int.	Sign used	Including
1	intelligible	+ h	syntactic errors correctly heard by British listeners.
2	fairly intelligible	h	syntactic errors correctly guessed by British listeners.
3	partially intelligible	- h	syntactic errors wrongly heard by British listeners.
4	totally unintelligible	-- h	syntactic errors that could not be interpreted by British listeners.

It has to be pointed out that only syntactic errors were measured in terms of the four degrees of intelligibility. Elements other than syntactic errors, such as wrong or unfamiliar lexis or mispronunciation of words etc which might affect intelligibility were not taken into consideration and were, thus, put in parentheses. (See Appendixes E(1) and E(2).) Hence, usually part of and not the whole utterance was rated.

5.2.5. Information Included in Appendixes E (1) and E (2)

The following information was included in Appendix E(1) and E(2):

- (i) list of syntactically erroneous utterances grouped according to the criteria stipulated in S.5.2.2.
- (ii) syntactic error types classified according to the categories stipulated in Table 5.1;
- (iii) number of syntactic errors in utterances;
- (iv) degrees of intelligibility of syntactic errors listed in (i), according to the intelligibility rating scale for syntactic errors (Table 5.2) and their frequency;

(v) ethnic origin of subjects committing the syntactic errors.

5.2.6. Classification of Lexical Errors

Lexical errors were classified in two main categories viz.

- (i) lexical errors which were directly related to grammatical errors ie. the wrong word choice affected the grammatical structure of the utterance. In other words, it was both grammatically and semantically wrong. (ii) lexical errors which were directly related to meaning ie. the wrong word choice was only limited to the wrong word in a particular context. (App. E(3)). For example: lexical errors related to grammar:

Int. Three, Utt.16

I don't know the able to know English. (Here, grammatically the word 'able' was wrongly used. Moreover, it was wrong semantically too. The correct word choice should have been 'importance' and the whole utterance should have been 'I don't know the importance of knowing English'. (See. S.5.3.7. below).

Lexical errors related to meaning

Int. Three, Utt. 14

And cannot communicate with person. (Here, the word 'person' was wrongly used in this context. The correct word should have been 'people').

(For discussion, see S.5.3.7. below)

5.2.7. Degree of Intelligibility

Four degrees of intelligibility were identified and only the seven British listeners' interpretation was taken into account. (See S.5.4.2)

Table 5.3. Intelligibility rating scale for lexical errors

Degree	Specification of degree of int.	Sign used	Including
1	intelligible	+h	lexical errors correctly heard by British listeners.
2	fairly intelligible	h	lexical errors correctly guessed by British listeners.
3	partially intelligible	-h	lexical errors wrongly heard by British listeners.
4	totally un-intelligible	--h	lexical errors that could not be interpreted by British listeners.

5.2.8. Information Included in Appendix E (3)

The following information was included in Appendix E (3):

- (i) list of lexically erroneous utterances;
- (ii) lexical errors classified according to the categories stipulated in S.5.2.6;
- (iii) number of lexical errors in utterances;
- (iv) degrees of intelligibility of lexical errors listed in (i), rated on the intelligibility rating scale for lexical errors (Table 5.3.) and their frequency.
- (v) ethnic origin of subjects committing the lexical errors.

5.3. Analysis of Results

5.3.1 General Remarks

Of the one hundred and thirty-nine syntactic errors identified in Appendixes E (1) and E (2) (seventy-nine errors in App. E (1) and sixty in App. E (2)), one hundred and nine of them were error types 1 to 14. It was evident that most of the errors which fell into these categories were rated +h on the intelligibility rating scale for syntactic errors and did not, on the whole, interfere seriously with intelligibility. On the other hand, most of the thirty errors which fell into error types 15 to 18 were rated -h or --h on the same intelligibility rating scale and often caused some serious intelligibility problems.

A closer look at the error types reveals that many of the error types in categories 1 to 14 corresponded with Burt and Kiparsky's (1972, 1975) 'local' errors in principle (see S.5.1.2). e.g. errors in verb inflections (equivalent to error type 3); errors in articles (equivalent to error type 13); errors in auxiliaries (equivalent to Error type 1) etc. As they claim, this category of errors does not usually hinder communication significantly. Moreover, they admit that some errors such as missing subject (equivalent to error type 7) affect overall sentence structure and can be considered global errors (1972:13), which generally caused the listener to misinterpret the speaker's message. (See S.5.1.2). Coincidentally, it was found in this study that similar errors caused some intelligibility problems i.e. about 23.1% of error type 7 was rated --h in the whole sample (Table 5.6). Burt and Kiparsky also regard wrong passive construction (equivalent to error type 4) as 'global' error and it was also

discovered in this study that similar errors affected intelligibility to some extent, ie about 33.5% of error type 4 was rated --h in the entire corpus. (Table 5.6)

Two of the error types in categories 15 to 18 corresponded with Burt and Kiparsky's 'global' errors in principle viz wrong word order (error type 17) and unEnglish sentences (error type 16). It was found that both error types caused considerable intelligibility problems in this study ie 35.7% and 48.6% of error types 16 and 17 were rated --h in the entire corpus, respectively. (Table 5.6). Hence, there was a great deal of parallelism between the findings of this study and those of Burt and Kirparsky.

5.3.2. Intelligibility and Syntactic Errors

5.3.2.1 Analysis of Appendix E (1)

Table 5.4. below gives a breakdown of statistics in Appendix E (1):

Table 5.4 Total number of ratings of syntactic errors mostly rated +h and their percentages

Error type *	No of occurrence		Totals		
	(including all 7 listeners)	+h	h	-h	--h
1	35	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2	35	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3	14	11 (78.6%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.1%)
4	14	14 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
5	7	6 (85.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (14.3%)	0 (0%)
6	42	41 (97.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.4%)
7	35	33 (94.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (5.7%)
8	14	13 (92.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.1%)
9	14	14 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
10	42	38 (90.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (4.8%)	2 (4.8%)
11	91	90 (98.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2.2%)
12	56	51 (91.1%)	0 (0%)	2 (3.6%)	3 (5.3%)
13	56	56 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
14	35	29 (82.8%)	3 (8.6%)	3 (8.6%)	0 (0%)
15	14	14 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
16	35	32 (91.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (5.7%)	1 (2.9%)
17	7	4 (57.1%)	0 (0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (14.3%)
18	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

It can be seen from Table 5.4 that none of the error types 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 15 (there was no occurrence of error type 18) was rated --h and thus, did not cause any intelligibility problems. Hence, they might be considered less serious than other error types. Among them, error types 5 and 14 which had some instances rated -h for some of the listeners could be considered slightly more serious than error types 1, 2, 4, 9, 13 and 15 which did not affect intelligibility at all. Error type 12 seemed to be more serious than those mentioned above with three responses rated --h, while error types 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16 and 17 seemed to be intermediate in seriousness, with one or two responses rated --h each.

There were two utterances categorized under error type 15 (ie phrases which need restructuring). The degree of intelligibility in this category depended very much on how much restructuring was needed in the two cases mentioned ie 'The most time I am in library' (Int. Two, Utt. 9) and 'So will make me more freely to..... mix with people' (Int. Seven, Utt. 12) were easy to understand even without restructuring. This explains why the degree of intelligibility was so high. (ie both were rated +h for all seven listeners). If this was to be compared with utterances with the same error type listed in Appendix E (2), for instance, 'I think I want to do my future study in my master' (Int. Five, Utt. 9), some rephrasing had to be done before the utterance could be made more intelligible and was, thus, rated +h for two listeners and -h for five listeners.

5.3.2.2 Analysis of Appendix E (2)

Table 5.5 below gives a breakdown of statistics in Appendix E (2).

Table 5.5 Total number of ratings of syntactic errors mostly rated -h or --h and their percentages

Error Type *	No. of occurrence (including all 7 List)	Total			
		+h	h	-h	--h
1	35	1(2.9%)	0(0%)	20(57.1%)	14(40.0%)
2	0	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
3	0	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
4	7	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	7(100%)
5	7	0(0%)	0(0%)	7(100%)	0(0%)
6	7	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(57.1%)	3(42.9%)
7	56	5(8.9%)	0(0%)	32(57.2%)	19(33.9%)
8	0	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
9	14	0(0%)	0(0%)	8(57.1%)	6(42.9%)
10	14	3(21.4%)	0(0%)	6(42.9%)	5(35.7%)
11	28	0(0%)	0(0%)	14(50.0%)	14(50.0%)
12	18	0(0%)	1(3.6%)	21(75.0%)	6(21.4%)
13	35	1(2.9%)	0(0%)	18(51.4%)	16(45.7%)
14	35	3(8.6%)	0(0%)	20(57.1%)	12(34.3%)
15	42	2(4.7%)	1(2.4%)	28(66.7%)	11(26.2%)
16	35	2(5.7%)	0(0%)	9(25.7%)	24(68.6%)
17	28	0(0%)	1(3.6%)	11(39.3%)	16(57.1%)
18	56	4(7.2%)	0(0%)	26(46.4%)	26(46.4%)

*See Page 184

Table 5.5 shows that error types 16 and 17 ie utterances with unEnglish expressions and wrong word order were more serious than other errors, with 68.6% and 57.1% of such errors rated --h, respectively. There were no occurrences of error types, 2, 3, 5 and 8,

Many errors in error types 1 to 14 were errors which were embodied in utterances with error types 15 to 18 and with multiple errors ie with 2 or more errors. These errors (ie error types 1 to 14) were also included in the error count and, therefore, should not be taken into consideration as far as error gravity was concerned. For example, the main cause of intelligibility problem of the utterance, 'Er.... I don't with, within this week ah, within this two week ah, we mostly have programme, programme la'

(Int. Three, Utt. 18) lay in error type 18 (with incoherent elements

such as hesitation phenomena) rather than error type 10 (lack of singular / plural agreement) or error type 15 (phrases that need restructuring), but error type 10 was also calculated in the total error count. There were eleven utterances with error types 1 to 14 mostly rated -h or --h which did not involve error types 15 to 18 and in many cases, syntactic errors were not the main cause of intelligibility problems. For example, the utterance 'The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park' (Int. One, Utt.7) was rated --h for all seven listeners. The intelligibility problem was not due to error type 1 (addition of verb) or error type 13 (addition of article) but due to lack of shared knowledge of 'D.R.' (For details, see Chapter Six, S.6.6.3)

The degree of intelligibility of error type 16 (unEnglish or non-standard expressions) depended on the degree of deviation from standard British English. For example, utterances such as 'so so la' (Int. One, Utt. 19) and 'around like that' (Int. Nine, Utt.5) were rated --h for all seven listeners in both cases because most probably the native speakers would never use such expressions themselves. On the other hand, the utterance 'I can't say like that' (Int. Six, Utt.27) was rated +h for six listeners and -h for one listener because this is a possible English expression (though not in this context). It could be quite correct if uttered with appropriate intonation and stress and has a range of possible interpretations. eg 'Say' for 'speak' or in contrast with '..... but I can like this'.

Since error type 14 included errors of miscellaneous nature, the degrees of intelligibility vary. eg 'verb' for 'noun' in 'Under the sponsored by my department' (Int. Seven, Utt.19); 'past participle' for 'present participle' in 'Four of us, included me'. (Int. Eight, Utt.17); 'wrong negation' in 'They have not enough education' (Int. Ten, Utt.34) were all rated +h for all seven listeners. On the other hand, 'wrong question-tag' in 'Everything has to rush in, is it?' (Int. Ten, Utt. 13) was rated +h for four listeners and h for three listeners, and 'double negative' in 'Not unlike K.L...' (Int. One, Utt.17) was rated +h for four listeners and --h for three listeners.

5.3.3 Intelligibility and Single/Multiple Syntactic Errors

Appendixes E(1) and E(2) indicate that, on the whole, the higher the number of errors in utterances, the lower the degrees of intelligibility. In other words, utterances with multiple syntactic errors were more difficult to interpret than those with single syntactic errors. This finding supported Chastain (1980), Guntermann (1978) and Burt's (1972) (See S.5.1.1 and 5.1.2)

It was also found that if multiple errors were any of the two error types 1 to 14, e.g. 'I majoring Chemistry'. (Int. One, Utt.24; with error types 1 and 11). 'When I small, I don't know'. (Int. Three Utt. 15, with error types 1 and 2), the degree of intelligibility was very high and in these cases, both were rated +h for all seven listeners. Nevertheless, if an utterance contained more than two error types 1 to 14, the degree of intelligibility might be low. e.g. 'And for the games ah, a bit only la' (Int. Two, Utt. 2) with error types 1, 7, 11 and 13) was rated -h for one listener and --h for six listeners.

On the other hand, utterances with 2 or more error types 15 to 18, especially 16, 17 and 18, usually had very low degree of intelligibility e.g. 'you know home ah, at home ah it is horrible'. (Int. four, Utt. 18 with error types 17,18) was rated -h for one listener and --h for six listeners

5.3.4. Intelligibility and Error Frequency

Tables 5.4 and 5.5 reveal that frequency of error did not, on the whole, correlate with the degree of intelligibility. e.g. In Table 5.4, error type 11, which had a high frequency of 91, had a high degree of intelligibility i.e. only 2.2% of such errors was rated --h. However, in Table 5.5, error type 18, which had a high frequency of 56, had a low degree of intelligibility, i.e. 46.4% of such errors was rated --h. Hence, the degree of intelligibility is directly related to error type and not frequency.

5.3.5 Hierarchy of Error Gravity of Syntactic Errors

As was stated earlier in this Chapter, there was no satisfactory method of establishing a general hierarchy of error gravity since a hierarchy of this nature depended solely on error types, classification of errors and the criteria used for judgement. However, a combination of the statistics in Tables 5.4 and 5.5,

regardless of the factors mentioned in S.5.3.3, will reveal some kind of hierarchy of error gravity of syntactic errors in the study and the hierarchy from most to least serious was in this descending order : Error types 17, 18, 16, 4, 7, 9, 1, 15, 13, 14, 11, 10/12, 6, 3/8, 2/5. (Table 5.6) In other words, utterances with wrong word order, (E.T.17), incoherent elements (E.T.18) and UnEnglish or nonstandard expressions (E.T.16) were very difficult to interpret whereas utterances with errors related to wrong tense (E.T.2) and wrong sequence of tense (E.T.5) were very easy to interpret. Coincidentally, Vann et al. (1984) found word order errors least acceptable and Albrechtsen et al. (1980) found that incoherent elements such as hesitation phenomena, pauses and restructuring, posed serious difficulty for listeners. (See S. 5.1.1 and 5.1.2)

Table 5.6 Statistics indicating hierarchy of error gravity of syntactic errors.

Error Type *	No. of occurrence including all List.	+h	h	-h	--h	Error gravity in descending order
1	70	36(51.4%)	0(0%)	20(28.6%)	14(20.0%)	VII
2	35	35(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	XV
3	14	11(78.6%)	2(14.3%)	0(0%)	1(7.1%)	XIV
4	21	14(66.7%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	7(33.3%)	IV
5	14	6(42.9%)	0(0%)	8(57.1%)	0(0%)	XV
6	49	41(83.6%)	0(0%)	4(8.2%)	4(8.2%)	XIII
7	91	38(41.7%)	0(0%)	32(35.2%)	21(23.1%)	V
8	14	13(92.9%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(7.1%)	XIV
9	28	14(50.0%)	0(0%)	8(28.6%)	6(21.4%)	VI
10	56	41(73.2%)	0(0%)	9(16.1%)	6(10.7%)	XII
11	119	90(75.6%)	0(0%)	14(11.8%)	15(12.6%)	XI
12	84	51(60.7%)	1(1.2%)	23(27.4%)	9(10.7%)	XII
13	91	57(62.6%)	0(0%)	18(19.8%)	16(17.6%)	IX
14	70	32(45.7%)	3(4.3%)	23(32.9%)	12(17.1%)	X
15	56	16(28.6%)	1(1.8%)	28(50.0%)	11(19.6%)	VIII
16	70	34(48.6%)	0(0%)	11(15.7%)	25(35.7%)	III
17	35	4(11.4%)	1(2.9%)	13(37.1%)	17(48.6%)	I
18	56	4(7.2%)	0(0%)	26(46.4%)	26(46.4%)	II

*See Page 184

Thus, the hierarchy of error gravity of syntactic errors can be tabulated as follows:

Table 5.7. Hierarchy of error gravity of syntactic errors in the main corpus

Most serious to least serious	Error type	Verbal description
I	17	Wrong word order (including misplacement of connectors).
II	18	'Incoherent' elements : utterances with incoherent elements such as hesitation phenomena eg pauses, restructuring, self-correction, unnecessary repetition of words, stutter, tongue slip and false starts etc.
III	16	UnEnglish or nonstandard expressions.
IV	4	Misformation of verbs in passive.
V	7	Omission/addition of subject or object
VI	9	Subject-verb concord.
VII	1	Omission/addition of main verb or auxiliary verb.
VIII	15	Phrases that need restructuring
IX	13	Omission/addition of articles; misuse of articles.
X	14	Miscellaneous: errors which occurred only once in the main corpus. eg 'wrong negation', 'wrong tag-question', 'wrong possessive construction', 'past participle' for 'present participle' etc.
XI	11	Omission/addition of preposition; misuse of preposition.
XII	10/12	Singular/plural agreement; wrong plural. Omission of dummy subject 'it' and/or + 'verb'; misuse of 'it is' and 'there are'.
XIII	6	Omission/addition of adverb or conjunction; misuse of adverb or conjunction.
XIV	3/8	Wrong past participle. Omission/Addition of subject pronoun.
XV	2/5	Wrong tense. Wrong sequence of tense.

5.3.6 Syntactic Error types and Ethnic Origin of Subjects

All the syntactic errors produced by the subjects in the main corpus can be regarded as universal errors, ie errors that are common for all learners of English. Most of the error types 1 to 14, for instance, can be included in Richards' (1974:182-8) categories of errors which were taken from studies of English errors produced by speakers of Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalog, Maori, Maltese and the major Indian and West African languages. Since his analysis was only limited to single errors at single sentence level, errors related to error types 15 to 18 were overlooked. The errors in my sample were, in fact, common errors of all Malaysian learners of English and were not characteristics of a particular ethnic group only.

Table 5.8 Error type, error frequency and ethnic origin of subjects.

Error Type *	Frequency	Frequency in terms of ethnic origin of subjects		
		Chinese	Malay	Indian
1	10	7(70.0%)	2(20.0%)	1(10.0%)
2	5	1(20.0%)	3(60.0%)	1(20.0%)
3	2	2(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
4	3	1(33.3%)	1(33.3%)	1(33.3%)
5	2	2(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
6	7	3(42.9%)	3(42.9%)	1(14.2%)
7	13	9(69.2%)	3(23.1%)	1(7.7%)
8	2	2(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
9	4	2(50%)	1(25.0%)	1(25.0%)
10	8	6(75.0%)	1(12.5%)	1(12.5%)
11	17	6(35.3%)	7(41.2%)	4(23.5%)
12	12	4(33.3%)	6(50.0%)	2(16.7%)
13	13	6(46.7%)	3(23.1%)	4(30.8%)
14	10	4(40.0%)	5(50.0%)	1(10.0%)
15	8	5(62.5%)	3(37.5%)	0(0%)
16	10	8(80.0%)	1(10.0%)	1(10.0%)
17	5	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	2(40.0%)
18	8	6(75.0%)	2(25.0%)	0(0%)
Total	139	76(54.7%)	42(30.2%)	21(15.1%)

*See Page 184

Table 5.8 shows that only the Chinese subjects committed error types 3, 5 and 8. This, however, did not imply that the Malay and Indian subjects would not commit similar errors.

The Table also reveals that the frequency of error types 1, 7, 9 10, and 18 (ie 70.0%, 69.2%, 50.0%, 75.0% and 75.0%, respectively) produced by the Chinese subjects was higher than that of the Malay (ie 20.0%, 23.1%, 25.0%, 12.5% and 25.0% respectively) and Indian subjects (ie 10.0%, 7.7%, 25.0% 12.5% and 0% respectively). The frequency of error types 2 and 12 produced by the Malay subjects (ie 60.0% and 50.0% respectively) was higher than that of the Chinese (ie 20.0% and 33.3% respectively) and Indian subjects (ie 20.0% and 16.7% respectively). Although this might imply that a certain ethnic group was more inclined to commit certain types of syntactic errors, the characteristics were, nevertheless, not very significant.

A breakdown of the statistics in Table 5.8 shows that 54.7% of the syntactic errors was produced by the Chinese subjects, 30.2% by the Malay subjects and 15.1% by the Indian subjects. Compared with the number of interviews the three ethnic groups took part ie the Chinese subjects took part in 5 interviews (or 50%) the Malay subjects 3 interviews (or 30%) and the Indian subjects 2 interviews (or 20%), the ethnic group who committed most syntactic errors (though the differences were not significant) was in this descending order: Chinese, Malay, Indian.

The proportional errors of the three ethnic groups can, thus, be tabulated:

Table 5.9 Proportional errors of three ethnic groups

Ethnic group	% of all errors	No of Interviews	Proportional error in %
Chinese	54.7%	5	69.2%
Malay	30.2%	3	22.9%
Indian	15.1%	2	7.9%

Moreover, of the 29 utterances which were mostly rated -h or --h (App. E (2)), 16 (or 55.2%) were produced by the Chinese subjects, 12 (or 41.4%) by the Malay subjects and 1 (or 3.4%) by one of the Indian subjects. It, thus seemed that the Indian subjects' utterances were most intelligible to the British listeners. Besides, as the Indian subjects committed the fewest syntactic errors, it can be said that syntactic errors constituted one of the major causes of intelligibility problems.

5.3.7 Intelligibility and Lexical Errors

Appendix E (3) reveals that there were only 13 utterances in which the subjects used wrong lexical words. Compared with the total number of lexical words used in the entire corpus, the number was definitely insignificant. This finding again supports that of Albrechsten.(1980) (See S.5.1.2)

The degree of intelligibility of wrong word choice depended not only on the degree of deviation from the correct word but also on the pronunciation of the word and the context and structure of the utterance. For example, in 'Previously I am doing just in the aid section', (Int. Ten, Utt. 19), 'And then after that I am doing the juvenile cases', (Int. Ten, Utt. 21) and 'And then I am doing the prostitution side also', (Int. Ten, Utt. 23) the use of the word 'doing' instead of 'handling', 'managing' or 'dealing with' was clearly not a serious deviation and, thus, the degree of intelligibility was very high ie they were rated +h for all seven listeners in all the three instances. On the other hand, the degree of intelligibility for the wrong word used in 'because Channel 3 is only purpose for commercial' (Int. Six, Utt. 25) was low ie --h for all seven listeners because they expected the word 'meant' rather than 'purpose' in this context. The degree of intelligibility of lexical errors in idiomatic phrases was low too. eg In 'one or two is force to close up already' (Int. Nine, Utt. 9), 'close up' instead of 'close down' was used and the degree of intelligibility was as low as --h for all seven listeners.

In addition, it must also be pointed out that the low degrees of intelligibility of 'we make one room as sleeping room' (Int. Four, Utt. 21), rated -h for two listeners and --h for five listeners, was not caused by wrong word choice of 'make' for 'use' and 'sleeping room' for 'bedroom' as both pairs of words practically mean the same thing, but by mispronunciation of the lexical words 'sleeping room' [slipiŋ dʌm]. Lexical errors which were directly related to grammatical errors could generally be guessed correctly by means of helpful contextual clues eg 'I don't know the able to know English' (Int. Three, Utt. 16) was rated +h for five listeners and --h for two listeners. The words 'know' and 'English' and the subsequent utterance '... then I found English very important' helped the listeners to interpret the word 'able' correctly as 'importance'. (See 5.2.6 above)

5.3.8 Intelligibility and Other Lexical Items

(1) Fillers

This is a term used by Tongue (1974: 86) to refer to an item of language, a word or a particle, which 'communicates no particular denotative meaning but which is used to indicate emotive, effective attitudes of the speaker, or sometimes simply to "fill" a pause or a moment of hesitation or reflection in the stream of speech'.

The most well-known 'filler' in Malaysian English is 'la' or 'lah' (in the case of Malay and Indian speakers, it is usually pronounced with a final aspirate sound). For Tongue, (1974: 114) the range of its meaning depends on the way it is pronounced, for instance, 'it can function as an interesting particle, as a marker of informal style, as a signal of intimacy, for persuading, deriding, wheedling, rejecting and a host of other purposes'. Richards and Tay (1977) consider it a marker of rapport, solidarity, familiarity and informality and convincingly argue its derivation from Hokkien and not from standard Malay or Mandarin. My own sample seems to support Richards and Tay's claim that 'la' is a marker of solidarity and informality: the interviews were held in a relaxed atmosphere and the interviewers were friendly and informal. Thus, the use of 'la'

was, in fact, predictable.

Although it is beyond the scope of this study to trace the origin of 'la' or 'lah', my sample, again, seems to support Richards and Tay's claim that it originated from Hokkien and not from standard Malay. There were occurrences of 'la' in all the five interviews in which the Chinese subjects took part: there were thirteen occurrences of 'la' in Interview One, six in Interview Two, nine in Interview Three, four in Interview Four and two in Interview Nine. There were two occurrences of 'lah' in Interview Six in which an Indian subject took part, but strangely enough, there were no traces of 'lah' in the three interviews in which the Malay subjects took part.

The filler 'la' or 'lah' did not interfere with intelligibility. Although it confused the British listeners when they heard it the first or second time, they soon took no notice of its occurrence. They, however, admitted that it irritated them to some extent. The only instance when 'la' interfered with intelligibility was for Listener 5, who interpreted 'I think.... Mon.... Monday la' (Int. Two, Utt. 12) as 'I think on Monday last'.

Other fillers such as 'what' and 'man' did not occur in the sample. The filler 'ah' occurred some fourteen times (all ethnic groups), but it did not affect intelligibility. There were a few instances when 'ah' was not merely a 'filler' as it conveyed denotative meanings, eg In Interview Nine, when the interviewer asked 'Doesn't have much what?', the subject (Chinese) replied, 'Ah?' which was pronounced with rising intonation, conveying the meaning, 'What?'. When the Interviewer knew what the subject meant was 'Not much recreation', he (the subject) confirmed it by saying, 'Ah', which was pronounced with a falling intonation, conveying the meaning 'Yes'. Both were apparently interference from the subject's L1, Hokkien. They, however, did not interfere with intelligibility. (See also Chapter One, S.1.5.2)

(ii) Code-switching

One of the features of Malaysian Spoken English is the use of Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese or Indian words to replace some English

words. This feature, generally known as 'code-switching' or 'lexical switch', usually takes place where there is a common knowledge of the words used between the interlocutors. The subjects in the corpus, however, took it for granted that the British interviewer had a knowledge of non-English words and used them on several occasions. There was only one occasion in which communication broke down: when the subject replied to one of the Interviewer's questions, 'Most of the time go to "tanjung"'. (Int. Nine, Utt. 10), the Interviewer's immediate question was 'What do you mean by "tanjung"?'

There were five other instances of code-switching in the corpus, and expectedly, none of the British listeners could interpret them. They were: 'San Poh Tong' (Int. One, Utt. 6), 'Tong' for 'Cave' (Chinese) 'And "padang" there' (Int. One, Utt. 10), 'padang' for 'field' (Malay); 'In Muar, they have also a.... er.... what, a "tanjung"', '"Tanjung" I think is quite okay la' (Int. Four, Utt. 7; Int. Nine, Utt. 11), 'tanjung' for 'seaside' (Malay). The only code-switching instance which, expectedly, did not interfere with intelligibility was the word 'matrikulasi' in 'something like "matrikulasi"'. (Int. Five, Utt. 5) where all the listeners heard it correctly, as 'matriculation' as the word is, in fact, a loan word from English.

5.4 General Conclusion and Some limitations

Generally speaking, most of the error types 1 to 14 did not cause serious intelligibility problems for British listeners. On the other hand, errors in error types 16 to 18, and in particular, error types 17 and 18, ie utterances with 'wrong word order' and 'incoherent elements', respectively, had greatly impeded intelligibility. Utterances with multiple syntactic errors, especially those with error types 16 to 18, were more difficult to interpret than those with error types 1 to 14. However, utterances with two or more Error types 1 to 14 were also found relatively difficult to interpret. Of the eighty-nine syntactically erroneous utterances listed in Appendixes E (1) and E (2), twenty-nine utterances were mostly rated -h or --h. In other words, about 32.6% of all the syntactically erroneous utterances in the

corpus caused some serious intelligibility problems.

Because of the limited size of the corpus, certain syntactic errors eg errors in error type 14 occurred only once and error types 3, 5 and 8 occurred only twice in the entire corpus. It was not certain whether other utterances with similar errors would give rise to similar degrees of intelligibility.

In addition, the subjects might have ~~not~~ used structures not included in the corpus which they found difficult to construct. For instance, it is generally claimed by error analysis researchers that many learners of English have difficulties in using relative clauses and conditional clauses. In this corpus, twelve relative clauses were used (three by Chinese, five by Malay and four by Indian subjects), and only four conditional clauses were used (one by Chinese, two by Malay and one by Indian subjects). However, it was found that all the utterances with these two types of clauses were structurally correct.

Schachter (1974: 212) looked into the acquisition of English relative clauses by speakers of Persian, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese and found that 'the learner apparently constructs hypotheses about the target language based on knowledge he already has about his own language..... If they are radically different, he will either reject the new construction or use it with extreme caution..... and the student can take advantage of paraphrase relations to avoid constructions he finds difficult, while still getting his ideas across'. To substantiate her claim, she gave evidence with examples from the compositions of Japanese and Chinese students. It is doubtful whether it was due to the difficulty that the Chinese subjects found in constructing relative clauses that they only used the structure three times. However, there was hardly any evidence which could manifest the 'paraphrase' phenomenon. The only example may be this: 'I think Muar is the second biggest city in the Johore state and then the population is now, I think, two hundred thousand'. (Int. Nine, Utt. 2, 3)

Finally, the number of wrong word choice compared with the total number of correct words used was insignificant and the degree of intelligibility of wrong word choice depended very much on the choice of the word.

So far I have discussed linguistic errors that affected intelligibility. In the next chapter, I shall look into nonlinguistic variables that may affect intelligibility.

CHAPTER SIX

INTELLIGIBILITY AND NONLINGUISTIC ELEMENTS AT THE DISCOURSE LEVEL

In Chapters Four and Five, intelligibility problems arising from the utterances in the main corpus were analyzed in the light of linguistic errors ie phonological, syntactic and lexical errors. In this Chapter, intelligibility problems will be discussed in relation to nonlinguistic elements at the discourse level in the main corpus.

Communication in a face-to-face interaction such as conversation or interview is a process in which the participants create, negotiate and interpret personal meanings. In the early nineteen-seventies, researchers such as Fishman (1971), Gumperz and Hymes (1972) realised the inadequacy of the types of linguistic analysis in which investigations were restricted to the internal functioning of the linguistic code eg phonological, lexical and syntactic features, and independent of the circumstance or context in which the codes were used. Consequently, there has been a widening in the field of research in language and communication. Linguists such as Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Labov and Fanshel (1979), Gumperz and Tannen (1979, 1982), Widdowson (1979, 1980) include the external functioning of the verbal codes ie what people do with words. The focus of such approaches has changed from structure and grammar to function and communicative competence in the analysis of languages; from combining sentences in text to the manner in which they are used to perform communicative acts in discourse; from analysing sentences in isolation to analysing utterances in context.

To achieve communicative purpose, certain interpretative procedures have to be employed. The failure to employ appropriate interpretative procedure will lead to miscommunication or noncommunication. Different interpretative strategies are employed in different speech acts and in different speech situations, for instance, whether (i) both the speaker and listener are participants of an ongoing interaction; (ii) the interaction is between native speakers (NS-NS), between native-nonnative speakers (NS-NNS) or nonnative-nonnative speakers (NNS-NNS); (iii) the listener is a nonparticipant of an ongoing interaction, ie an 'overhearer'.

The first part of this chapter will concentrate on intelligibility and communication between participants in face-to-face interactions,

regardless of whether the participants are native or nonnative speakers. This will be followed by a discussion of cross-cultural communication. The second part of the chapter will focus on utterance interpretation and the role of listeners (ie nonparticipants) in face-to-face interactions. Both aspects will be analysed in terms of the utterances at the discourse level in the main corpus.

6.1 Realization of Meaning in Face-to-Face Interaction

6.1.1 Meaning and Verbal/Nonverbal Codes in Face-to-Face Interaction

Laver and Hutcheson (1972) claim that an act of communication in a face-to-face interaction can be realized by a wide range of behaviours, both verbal and nonverbal, and the meaning is conveyed by inter-relationships between a number of semiotic systems which include 'all the means of communication capable of conventionally coded, short-term manipulation — language, tone of voice, gesture, position, body movements, spatial orientation, physical proximity, eye-contact and facial expression can be thought of as being woven together to form the fabric of a conversation, and we can understand the communicative context of an interaction best by seeing the relationships of the different strands.'

Gumperz (1980: 16) also realizes that speech interaction is not just a matter of 'unilateral action' but rather of 'speaker-listener co-ordination' which involves exchange of both verbal and nonverbal signs. By means of the verbal codes which the participants use to respond to each other's speech and the 'listenership cues' which they provide for each other, they signal agreement and disagreement. Thus, they 'tune into' the other's way of speaking and, hence, the message is understood. (See also S. 6.5 (ii))

6.1.2 Negotiation of Meaning between Participants of a Face-to-Face Interaction

One of the procedures that participants of a face-to-face interaction employ to achieve their communicative goals is to create a common meaning with other participants. As Widdowson (1984: 100) points out,

Communication is called for when the language users recognize a situation which requires the conveyance of information to establish a convergence of knowledge, so that this situation can be changed in some way. This transaction requires the negotiation of meaning through interaction. I refer to this negotiation as discourse. The term ... refers to the interaction that has to take place to establish the meaning value of utterances and to realize their effectiveness as indications of illocutionary acts.

Moreover, in negotiating meaning, participants usually employ a knowledge of language and the conventions associated with its use in social contexts. Such knowledge is acquired to meet individual and social needs. If the participants have a common world knowledge, very little or no negotiation of meaning is needed to achieve communicative goals in an interaction. Otherwise, the negotiation can be a protracted one. Riley (1985: 8), for instance, gives an authentic example of a protracted negotiation of meaning when A is trying to explain to B where he lives:

A: 24, rue Marie-Odile. Got it?

B: That's Nancy?

A: Yeah.

B: I don't ---

A: Look, you know Laxou?

B: Yeah.

A: You know the road to Toul, where it starts by the Renault garage one side?

B: Right...

A: and the Peugeot on the other?

B: Right ... Yeah right.

A: So if you're coming from the middle of town, up the Avenue de Boufflers, it's off on the left. Just before you got there there's a big service station, you turn left just before.

B: Yeah, I know.

Throughout this exchange, we can see a kind of negotiation whereby the two participants employ a variety of procedures to interpret each other's utterances by reference to their common knowledge of the situation: In the beginning of the negotiation, A is trying to provide B with his knowledge concerning the location of the reference, '24 rue Marie Odile'. While providing a starting point for the negotiation, 'That's Nancy?' B is, in fact, asking for confirmation of a hypothesis formed on the basis that it is in the town 'Nancy'. Having established their mutual scope of reference ie a piece of shared knowledge, A begins to establish a series of common points of reference, 'You know ... You know...' in relation to which he introduces new information which he thinks would be meaningful to B. B signals that the points of reference are common knowledge, 'Right ... Yeah right? Negotiation is finally achieved when A pinpoints a landmark 'service station' which turns out to be another piece of shared knowledge, 'Yeah, I know'. (See also S.6.3 and 6.5)

Hence, it is by means of this kind of socio-cultural frame or schema (For details, see S. 6.4) that the participants apply their knowledge of the world to the interpretation of what goes on in an ongoing interaction and it is the negotiation required to achieve agreement that provides the continuous flow of discourse development.

6.1.3 Intelligibility and Lack of shared Linguistic/Cultural Background between Participants of a Face-toFace Interaction

Thomas (1983: 91) posits that communication breakdown due to lack of common linguistic or cultural background is 'cross-cultural' which is 'not just native-nonnative interaction', but any kind of communication between two people of the same origin, who, in any particular domain, do not share a common linguistic or cultural background. For instance, miscommunication can occur between English people who come from different classes or regions, such as workers and management, members of ethnic minorities and the police.

Moreover,, for Thomas, it is one's grammatical knowledge which provides the range of possible meanings of utterances and if the listener chooses the one which is not intended by the speaker, he will fail to perceive the speakers' communicative intent. She presents this example of

misunderstanding when the listener fails to perceive the intended illocutionary force of the speaker's utterance: (1983:93)

A: (to fellow passenger on a long-distance coach): Ask the driver what time we get to Birmingham.

B: (to driver): Could you tell when we get to Birmingham, please?

Driver: Don't worry, Love, it's a big place — I don't think it's possible to miss it!

In this exchange, the driver understood that B's utterance was a request for information, but failed to understand which proposition B had expressed ie he misunderstood the intended meaning of the word 'when'. In fact, in relaying the message to the driver, B had already modified what A had said ie instead of using the same adverb phrase 'What time', B only used the adverb 'When' which was more general and might mean 'Could you tell me when we arrive at Birmingham,' in the sense that 'When we arrive at Birmingham, could you let me know.' Hence, the driver mistook the word 'when' to mean 'the time we arrive at Birmingham' rather than 'At what time will we arrive at Birmingham?'. Misunderstanding thus arose. (See also 6.3)

6.1.4 Intelligibility and Context in Face-to-Face Interaction

In a face-to-face interaction, participants generally share a kind of pragmatic competence which enables them to interpret contextual factors. Smith and Wilson (1979:174) claim that an utterance in context contains 'items of nonlinguistic knowledge shared by speaker and hearer, and a set of shared inference rules'. However, sometimes these 'shared inference rules' are not sufficient to prevent misinterpretation of the illocutionary force of indirect speech acts between two participants who know each other very well and sometimes these misinterpretations are repaired. Milroy (1984:25) gives the example:

Wife: Will you be home early today?

Husband: When do you need the car?

Wife: I don't, I just wondered if you'd be home early.

The wife's question was, in fact, rather ambiguous. The husband misunderstood her proposition and made this assumption: His wife needed the car and that was why she asked whether he could be home early. However, the husband's assumption could be correct on another occasion

when the wife really needed the car. Hence, misinterpretation can still arise between interlocutors with 'shared inference rules'. (See also 6.3)

6.2 Intelligibility and Cross-Cultural Communication

6.2.1 Linguistic/Cultural Differences and Intelligibility in Native-Nonnative Interactions.

Communication is, by its nature, culturally relative. People in different communities have different ways of using linguistic means to communicate with one another, and their ways of speaking, like other cultural patterns, define them as a community. Hence, when a speaker of a foreign language is talking to a native speaker of the target language, one of his ways of speaking is to transfer some of his native language culture-specific concepts into the target language conversation. For instance, in the West, a compliment is usually acknowledged with thanks. eg

A (NS) = What a beautiful house you have!

B (NS) = Thank you. I'm glad you like it.

On the other hand, in order to be modest, apologies rather than thanks are usually more appropriate replies to compliments in nearly all cultures in Asia.

A (NS) = What a beautiful house you have!

B (NNS) = Oh! It's a very old house which hasn't been renovated for years!

If A does not share B's cultural assumption which determines B's linguistic choice, A may misunderstand that his compliment is not accepted.

Richards (1983: 213) quotes Sugiyana's (1979) example:

In England, 'thank you' may be used to express gratitude, but in Japanese, the equivalent utterance may not sound very sincere and, thus the speaker apologizes instead of acknowledging a compliment:

When a Japanese wants to express sincere gratitude, he feels urged to say "I am sorry" since "thank you" does not sound sincere enough. This is one of the typical mistakes Japanese make in their interaction with English speakers. The latter being likely to say "Why sorry?"

Hence, linguistic and cultural differences between NS-NNS interactions may give rise to misunderstanding. (See also 6.3)

6.2.2 Intelligibility and corrective Procedure for Negotiating Meaning in NS - NNS Interactions

In a NS - NNS interaction, when NNS is not competent in the NS's language, the NS may employ a trial-and-error interpretative strategy in order to achieve common references in the discourse. For instance, in the following example cited by Varonis and Gass (1985: 85)

NS: What's the movie tonight? (referring to TV)
 NNS: I don't know.
 NS: What was it last week?
 NNS: Yesterday?
 NS: Yeah.
 NNS: Em, ah, no me no, no looked no.
 NS: You didn't look at it?
 NNS: No. ah ah I look play.
 NS: You play?
 NNS: No. I look play hockey. The game.
 NS: You play hockey? You play the game?
 NNS: No! In the television.
 NS: Uh, huh?
 NNS: I'm looking one game.
 NS: At a game. You looked at a game on television.
 What kind of a game?
 NNS: Hockey.

It is apparent that besides trying to establish common points of reference with the NNS by using words such as 'look', 'play', 'game', 'television', 'hockey', the NS is correcting the NNS's utterances in order to achieve communicative purpose. eg

no looked no (NNS) : You didn't look at it? (NS)
 I look play (NNS) : You play? (NS)
 I look play hockey (NNS) : You play hockey? You play
 the game? (NS)

Hence, sometimes in NS - NNS interactions, the NS has to employ some corrective strategy in order to achieve communicative goals.

In an investigation of NS -NNS interaction in social settings, Chun et al. (1982, 1983) learned that only a small percentage (8.9%) of NNS errors were corrected by NS and these corrections occurred in response to errors of fact, discourse, vocabulary, syntax and omission eg.

(i) Discourse errors: Errors beyond the sentence level.

NNS : and how do you feel the ... uh ... Taiwan New Year?

NS : You didn't let me finish my question. (1982:539)

They pointed out that though there were other errors in the NNS's utterance, the NS focused only on the discourse violation.

The context in which such discourse violation occurred was apparently inadequate. Ambiguity could have been avoided if the exchange had been restructured. eg

NS : I heard you're from Taiwan.

NNS : Yes. You went there before?

NS : Yes. I was there a couple of years ago and I found that the people there were very friendly. Which part of Taiwan....

NNS : and how do you feel the ... uh ... Taiwan New Year?

NS : You didn't let me finish my question.

(ii) Factual errors: Errors concerning factual knowledge and truth value of an utterance.

NS : We have five people. I'm the only girl, I'm oldest —

NNS : — Oh, you're the oldest —

NS : — and two — I have two younger brothers.

NNS : I see, so the other two will be sisters.

NS : No.

NNS : Oh, including your parents, oh, I see.

NS : Only three kids. (1982:540)

Here, the NNS mistakenly inferred that by five people the NS meant only children. The NS corrected her, clarifying that there were only three children in her family.

(iii) Word choice errors: Errors including incorrect choice or addition of a noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, question word and all other

types of function words.

NNS : And the ear, coffee's ear.

NS : Oh, the ear — you mean the handle.

NNS : Yeah, the handle. (1983:220)

- (iv) Omission: Errors including incorrect omission of nouns, verbs, auxiliaries, articles and other types of word required by rules of standard English grammar.

NNS : He — she — she -- ... uh... three years went there.

NS : Three years ago she went there?

NNS : Yeah. (1983:220)

It has to be pointed out that the breakdowns in communication in the examples given above do not necessarily take place in NS - NNS interactions only. Even between NS-NS interactions, breakdown in communication in (i) and (ii) above is definitely very common, and in (iii) and (iv) not unknown. Hence, such breakdowns are not necessarily cross-cultural. (See also S. 6.3.1 and 6.6.10)

6.2.3 Intelligibility and Discourse Organization in NS-NNS Interaction

Tannen (1984:194) defines 'cohesion' as 'surface level ties showing relationships among elements in discourse' and 'coherence' as 'organizing structure making the words and sentences into a unified discourse that has cultural significance'. In cases where 'organizing structure' of the discourse of the NNS differs from that of the NS, communication breakdown may happen.

Gumperz (1979 (a) : 28) shares this view: He claims that one of the factors which cause communication breakdown in NS-NNS interaction is the differences in the structuring of information between the two languages. He illustrates this point by citing an example in a job interview in which the interviewer (NS) makes wrong inferences from the interviewee's (NNS) reply because the interviewee's answer was judged irrelevant in the sense that he structured his information in such a way that the most relevant points were at the end of the reply. For instance, in reply to the interviewer's question, 'What exactly do you do in your present job?' the interviewee began by talking about some of the activities of the centre where he was working which was background to his reply, rather than about what he did in his job, and

only came to details of his actual job at the end of his reply. Thus, the answer ends at the point where an English candidate begins his answer. For Gumperz, this kind of discourse structure makes the answer sound irrelevant to English listeners.

Young (1982:75) also posits that intelligibility problems in NS-NNS interaction may arise where there are substantial differences in their discourse conventions. She points out that many South-East Asian languages such as Chinese have 'discourse patterns' which seem to be the inverse of English discourse patterns in that main arguments are delayed until the end because there is a 'Chinese preference for the steady unravelling and building-up of information before arriving at the important message.' One of the examples she gives is a recorded talk given by a visiting professor of nutrition from Peking: (P.76-77)

American: How does the Nutritional Institute decide what topics to study?

How do you decide what topic to do research on?

Chinese: Because, now, period get change. It's different from past time. In past time, we emphasize how to solve practical problems. Nutrition must know how to solve some deficiency diseases. In our country, we have some nutritional diseases, such as X, Y, Z. But, now it is important that we must do some basic research. So, we must take into account fundamental problems. We must concentrate on research to study some fundamental research.

Young learned that native English speakers who listened to the tape experienced many difficulties with the discourse organization because the main point was not brought up until the very end and they lacked the understanding of how important information was highlighted. Moreover, the opening lines of the discourse did not provide a preview statement which would have orientated the listener to the overall direction of the discourse. Hence, the lack of precision and the failure to answer questions directly led to the conception that 'the Chinese speakers were beating around the bush'. (P.79) (See also S.6.3.2 and 6.6.7)

6.3 Intelligibility and NS-NNS Interactions in the Oral Interviews

Of the one hundred and sixty five interview questions in the main corpus,

one hundred and fifty seven were asked by the main interviewer who is a native speaker of English and the interviews can, therefore, be considered a NS-NNS interaction. The interviewer had been teaching in the University for nearly three years when the oral interviews were conducted. Hence, he was quite familiar with the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the interviewees ie the students. In other words, he had acquired considerable shared knowledge with the students, in particular, shared knowledge about the University. Hence, on the whole, there was no communication breakdown between him and the students in the ten oral interviews. Intelligibility problems only occurred on three occasions, but no protracted negotiation of meaning was necessary to achieve communicative goals.

Intelligibility problems on these three occasions were attributed to lack of shared background knowledge and phonological error:

- (i) In Interview One, the interviewer did not know what 'D.R. Park' in Ipoh was:

I: What's a Deer Park? What do you mean by Deer Park?

In my opinion, the intelligibility problem was due to lack of shared knowledge: The interviewer had not been to Ipoh. Neither had he heard of the Park. Moreover, the fact that he understood it immediately after the student explained to him what 'D.R.' stood for indicated that the cause of the intelligibility problem was lack of shared knowledge: (1)

S: No, the D.R. Park. The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park, Doctor Seenivasagam.

I: I see.

- (ii) In Interview Nine, the intelligibility problem arose from code-switching, the use of the Bahasa Malaysia word, 'tanjung':

S: Most of the time go to 'tanjung'. 'Tanjung'

I think 'tanjung' is quite okay la.

I: What do you mean when you say 'tanjung'?

S: Ah?

I: What do you mean by 'tanjung'?

S: 'Tanjung' ah ... 'tanjung' ... the seaside.

I: Seaside.

Code-switching or mixing is a common discourse feature in Malaysian speech. The lack of a shared understanding of the code led the interviewer not to grasp what was intended. However, the development of the discourse was not deterred as the negotiation of meaning was straightforward and brief.

- (iii) In Interview Nine, on the other hand, the cause of the intelligibility problem of the following was mainly phonological:

S: ...Muar don't have much recreation [rikrieʃən]

I: Doesn't have much what?

S: Ah?

I: Doesn't have much what?

S: I think... like... recreation.

I: Not much recreation. [rekrɪ'eɪʃən]

Hence again, through a brief negotiation, the message was put across.

6.3.1 Error correction in the Oral Interviews

Though it has been suggested by researchers such as Chun et al. (See S. 6.2.2) that some of the NNS errors are corrected by NS in NS-NNS interactions, there was not much evidence that this was the case in the main corpus. There were, in fact, numerous errors in the students' utterances, but the interviewer only 'corrected' a few. It is not certain whether he did it intentionally or not, but I would incline to think that, in most cases, errors were 'corrected' unintentionally. Moreover, even if he corrected them intentionally, apart from the pronunciation error in Example (i) below, he did not do it for the sake of achieving common meaning as seen in the examples given in Section 6.2.2.

(i) Interview Nine

S: Muar don't have much recreation.

I: Doesn't have much WHAT? — Syntactic correction:
subject-verb agreement

S: Ah?

I: Doesn't have much WHAT?

S: I think... like... recreation.

I: Not much recreAtion. [rekrɪ'eɪʃən] — Pronunciation
correction

The correction of 'don't' was, to me, quite involuntary. Had the interviewer corrected the error voluntarily, he would have repeated the subject 'Muar' eg 'Muar doesn't have much what?' or 'It doesn't have much what?' or placed the tonic on the word 'doesn't'. On the other hand, the pronunciation correction was apparently intentional as the tonic syllable of the utterances fell on the word 'recreation'. The interviewer, however, did not tell the student that he had pronounced the word incorrectly.

(ii) Interview Four

I: You're living on campus?

S: No, no. I stay outside.

I: You're living OUTside — Lexical correction

The word choice correction here is again, I think, unintentional because the tonic syllable of the utterance did not fall on 'living' but on 'outside'.

(iii) Interview Five

S: ... So I fail my TOEFL for last time.

I: So you failed your TOEFL last time. — Syntactic
correction: tense
and preposition

Like example (ii), the word 'TOEFL' was highlighted in the interviewer's utterance, indicating that he did not correct the errors intentionally.

6.3.2 Intelligibility and Discourse Organization in the Oral Interviews

There is no significant evidence that the students often structured their information in such a way that most relevant points only came at the end of the reply and that they were building up information before arriving at the important message.

There are two cases when the students provided a preview statement which could orientate the interviewer to the overall direction of the discourse before amassing the main points towards the end of the reply:

(i) Interview Two (Chinese)

I: Can you always find the book that you need?

S: Sometimes very difficult la because some books ah got

fews only. Two or three books and er... if... because many students need this book ah... so difficult to find la.

I: Mm. I see

(ii) Interview Six (Indian)

I: What do you think about TV3?

S: It's okay. Er... actually er... for Malaysians ah for all must need another Channel like TV3 because in the Channel Two and One, most the programme er... can say not very nice, but TV3 is okay.

I: Mhm. I see, Okay.

In both cases, no negotiation of meaning or repair was required and the interviewer's acknowledgement, 'Mhm. I see, Okay' shows that the subjects' utterances were understood.

There are two other instances where no preview statement was given to direct the interviewer's trend of thought. Yet, the interviewer encountered no problem in following the discourse organization:

(i) Interview Three (Chinese)

I: Why do you think English is important for your future?

S: Er... when I small... I don't know the able to know English. Now... er... after secondary feel... what I see and what I heard er... I found English very important.

I: Very important. Okay. Good.

(ii) Interview Six (Indian)

I:.... Some religious group had already said TV3 is bad.
What do you think of that?

S: That is depend on ... er ... depend on the ... person.
Er ... if we don't they don't like the Channel Three, that means they can change to Channel Two or One. We cannot comment the Channel Three because Channel Three is er... is only purpose for commercial. So we cannot comment anything about that.

I: Okay.

Here again, 'Okay', 'Good' indicate that the interviewer could follow

the development of the students' discourse though the most relevant points were only brought up towards the end of their reply.

There is only one occasion when the interviewer interrupted the student's reply, requesting a more relevant or specific answer:

Interview Ten (Malay)

I: In what way are they different?

S: In the ... in their daily life and then ...

I: Can you tell me something more specific?

S: And about the ... the traffic in K.L. also jam ...

One may argue that since the interviewer was already familiar with the way the students structured their information, he had no difficulty in following their discourse organization. Such discourse organization may affect intelligibility for 'naive' native speakers of English.

(See S.6.6.7)

Besides, there was no misunderstanding of any illocutionary force intended by either the interviewer or the students. Neither were there any cultural-specific utterances wrongly used by the students in the entire sample.

6.4 Utterance Interpretation and the Role of British Listeners in the Main Corpus

6.4.1 Interpretation of Text/Discourse and Schema Theory

According to schema theory (Bartlett 1932, Rumelhart and Ortony 1977), a spoken/written text/discourse does not carry meaning by itself but provides directions for listeners or readers as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge, which is known as listeners or readers' background knowledge and the previously acquired knowledge structures are known as schemata. Bartlett (1933:201) for instance, refers to a 'schema' as 'an active organization of past reactions or of past experiences which must always be supposed to be operating in any well-adapted organic response' and when new experiences are encountered, they are understood only as they can be related to an existing schema and simultaneously become a part of it. In other words, this 'active' and constructive process uses information from the encountered discourse

together with knowledge from past experience related to the discourse at hand to build a mental representation. Thus, comprehending a text or discourse is an interactive process between the listener or reader's background knowledge and the text or discourse.

Rumelhart and Ortony, however,, did not emphasize the constructing process, proposing that 'schemata represent stereotypes of concepts'. (1977:101) They present a schema for face which has subschemata for eye, mouth etc. which seems to have a lot in common with the features of a 'frame'.

Minsky (1975) proposes that our background knowledge is stored in memory in the form of data structures called 'frames' which represent stereotyped situations and 'when one encounters a new situation (or makes a substantial change in one's view of the present problem) one selects from memory a structure called a frame. This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary.' For him, the basic structure of a 'frame' contains labelled slots which can be fitted with expressions or fillers. For example, in a frame representing a typical library, there will be slots labelled 'books', 'shelves', 'staff' and so on. A particular library mentioned in a text or discourse can be treated as an instance of the library frame, and can be represented by filling the slots with the particular features of that particular library. A 'frame' can, therefore, be regarded as a structured representation of knowledge about the world.

According to schema theory, in the process of interpretation, the listeners or readers activate an appropriate schema against which they provide a text or discourse with a consistent interpretation. However, sometimes, though the listener or reader has a consistent interpretation for the text or discourse, it may not be the one intended by the speaker or author. Hence, what is understood from the text or discourse is a formation of the particular schema activated at the time of interpreting the text or discourse. Moreover, it is claimed that schemata also guide the linguistic representation of events or scenes of a text or discourse which are known as content schemata and that schemata which guide the rhetorical organization of a text or discourse are known as textual or formal schemata. In

a word, the basic assumption of the schematic theory of comprehending a text or discourse is an interactive process between the listener or reader's background knowledge of content and structure and the text or discourse itself. (For examples, see S.6.6.1, 6.6.2 and 6.6.3)

Previous Research Related to the Present Study

Bartlett (1933) carried out cross-cultural reading studies by asking educated English speakers to read and recall a North American Indian folktale entitled 'The War of the Ghosts'. This folktale was chosen because it has a very different social setting and the events described in the story are not readily related to each other by subjects who are not familiar with American Indian culture. It was found that the subjects typically modified the tale in a way consistent with their own culture. In other words, to make the story meaningful, they imposed their own European-based cultural schemata on it and unfamiliar objects and events were changed into familiar ones. Bartlett concludes that when people read a story, their background knowledge provides a framework for understanding the setting, mood, characters and chains of events.

Kintsch and Greene (1978: 1-13) also provide empirical support for the notion that culture-specific schemata play an important role in story comprehension. Four stories from Boccaccio's 'Decameron', with similar narrative schemata, were selected for the experiment. One hundred and eighty-three students were asked to write summaries of the stories. Raters who judged the quality of the summaries found that summaries from stories that corresponded to a familiar story schema were more informative than those from stories for which they did not have an appropriate schema, even when the latter accurately summarized the story in question.

To investigate whether readers with different cultural heritages comprehend and remember better the materials that are concerned with their own familiar culture ie materials for which they have already had background or schematic knowledge, than materials that are concerned with a less familiar or unfamiliar culture, ie materials for which they have less background or schematic knowledge or for which they lack appropriate schemata, Stefferson and Anderson (1979) asked a group of Indians living in America and a group of Americans to read and recall

two letters. Both the letters have similar rhetorical schematic organization but they differ in content culturally, one described a traditional Indian wedding and the other, a traditional American wedding. They found that the subjects in both groups read their native passage more rapidly and recalled a larger amount of culturally familiar text. In addition, both groups produced more culturally correct elaborations of the native passage and more culturally-based distortion of the foreign passage. They, thus conclude that the schemata embodying background knowledge about the content of a discourse exert a profound influence on how well the discourse will be comprehended, learned and remembered. (cf. findings in Chapter Seven, S.7.3)

Hence, the background or schematic knowledge of the listener or reader leads to better understanding of the many facets of intelligibility of a text or discourse. The lack of such knowledge will, to some extent, hinder the intelligibility of the text or discourse.

6.4.2 Conversational Implicatures, Inferences and Interpretation of Utterances

Grice (1975: 45) claims that talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of 'disconnected remarks' but of cooperative efforts between participants, the exercise of which he calls the 'cooperative principle'. The conversational maxims which support this principle are:

- Quantity: (i) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange);
(ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
- Quality: (i) Do not say what you believe to be false;
(ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- Relation: Be relevant.
- Manner: Be perspicuous, with various maxims such as
(i) avoid obscurity of expression,
(ii) Avoid ambiguity,
(iii) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity),
(iv) Be orderly.

In other words, speakers have to be informative, truthful, relevant and clear in what they say so that hearers can interpret their utterances accordingly. However, since no one can actually observe all the maxims all the time when he is speaking, Grice makes it possible to describe what types of meaning a speaker can convey by 'flouting' one of these maxims. This gives rise to the speaker's conveying an additional meaning to the literal meaning of his utterance, which he terms 'conversational implicature'. For instance,

A: I am out of petrol.

B: There is a garage round the corner. (P.51)

In this exchange, Grice suggests that B would be infringing the maxim 'Be relevant' unless he thinks, or thinks it possible, that the garage is open, and has petrol to sell. So he implies that the garage is open, or at least may be open.

To work out that a particular conversational implicature is present, Grice believes that the hearer has to know (i) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved; (ii) the Cooperative Principle and its maxims; (iii) the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance; (iv) other items of background knowledge; and (v) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case. (P.50) Hence, the implicature of the above example can be worked out in this way: The implicature, which is derived from the assumption that B is observing the Cooperative Principle, is that the garage is not only round the corner, but also will be open and selling petrol. Moreover, to arrive at the implicature, we must also have some common sense knowledge of the world. eg garages sell petrol, 'round the corner' is not far away. We also have to interpret A's remark not only as a statement of fact but as a request for help.

Hence, in Brown and Yule's words (1983 (b):33), 'implicatures' are 'pragmatic aspects of meaning' which are 'partially derived from the conventional or literal meaning of an utterance, produced in a specific context which is shared by the speaker and the hearer, and depend on a recognition by the speaker and the hearer of the Cooperative Principle

and its maxims'. The lack of such shared knowledge will hinder the process of arriving at the implicature. For example, people who know one another well can communicate efficiently in a way which may be incomprehensible to an outsider, a nonparticipant of the interaction, who does not belong to the group of people sharing a particular sort of experience or knowledge. To understand what is going on in this kind of interaction, we need to know about some extralinguistic circumstances or context. For example, in the following exchange,

A: Have you done your homework?

B: Well, it's Miss Brown's assignment.

A: Yes, I understand.

there is no formal linguistic marker linking B's response to A's question or A's reaction to B's response. Yet, they are apparently satisfied with their communication and, thus, they are observing Grice's Cooperative Principle and its maxims. It is also evident that A arrives at B's implicature without any difficulty as there is shared knowledge or background information between them regarding Miss Brown and this knowledge is not linguistic. An outsider who lacks such knowledge will find that the exchange does not make much sense and is, therefore, not coherent. (See also Chapter Three, S.3.7.1) However, if he attempts to arrive at the participants' intended meaning through a process of inference, for instance, he can infer from the word 'homework' that A, and possibly B, are students and from the word 'assignment' that Miss Brown is a teacher. He can thus make the assumption that Miss Brown is a very strict teacher and the implied answer will be 'Yes' or that Miss Brown is a very lenient teacher and the implied answer will be 'No'.

Wilson and Sperber (1983:12) raise doubts about Grice's concept of 'relevance' as they think that though it is 'intuitively' clear what being truthful and informative would involve, the same is not true of being 'relevant'. For them, 'relevance' should be treated as a 'proposition' as 'propositional information may be relevant whether or not it is deliberately communicated'. (P.13) Hence, an utterance is relevant in the sense that if and only if it communicates relevant propositional information. Moreover, defining relevance is a matter of deciding what relation has to hold between a proposition and a set

of contextual assumption if the one is to be relevant to the other. eg

A: Do you want some coffee?

B: Coffee keeps me awake. (P.18)

Wilson and Sperber suggest that to see whether B's response satisfies the principle of relevance, the listener must supply the contextual assumption 'She doesn't want to be kept awake' and derive the contextual implication 'She doesn't want any coffee', thus obtaining the answer 'No' to A's question. However, if he was unable to supply the assumption and derive the conclusion, he would not be able to see the utterance as satisfying the principle of relevance and may not be able to interpret B's intention. (See also S.6.6.6)

6.4.3 Coherence and Utterance Interpretation

In the notion of discourse structure, any verbal behaviour which does not manifest structure is not considered a discourse. It is, therefore, not difficult to distinguish between coherent and incoherent talk. One of the examples given by Labov (1970), an exchange between a doctor and a schizophrenic patient, has been quoted by many discourse analysts as 'incoherent' talk:

A: What's your name?

B: Well, let's say you might have thought you had something from before but you haven't got it any more.

A: I'm going to call you Dean.

B's response, which is grammatical but inappropriate to A's question, apparently does not conform to the rules for the production of coherent discourse. (See Chapter Three, S.3.7.1) However, Edmondson (1981:165) contends that there is no ground for recognizing the exchange as incoherent because 'the fact that we (I assume) share the counsellor's interpretation problem' makes it coherent. For him, an alleged incoherent discourse may be 'no other than a discourse which I cannot interpret as coherent, where I am a discourse analyst, not a discourse participant'. Thus, if a listener has grounds for believing that a stretch of language he is exposed to is coherent or makes sense, ^{he}_^ will interpret it in the manner he thinks it should be interpreted. This is more or less the role played by the British listeners in interpreting

the utterances in the main corpus. (For examples, see S.6.5 and 6.6.6)

Moreover, for Edmondson (1981: 12-13), 'interpretability is a matter of contextualization' which can be assumed if we have shared knowledge. He quotes Van Dijk's (1972:40) example, claiming that the 'sequence',

We will have guests for lunch.

Calderón was a great Spanish writer.

is not coherent unless we share the social and cultural background of it, ie we will immediately see a causal relation between the two utterances and assume that, for instance, the lunch will be held in memory of Calderón as a mark of respect. Hence, a possible contextualization such as the following will provide 'meaning' to the sequence:

— Do you know Calderón died exactly 100 years ago today?

— Good heavens! I'd forgotten. The occasion shall not pass unnoticed. We will have guests for lunch. Calderón was a great Spanish writer. I shall invite Professor Wilson and Senor Castellano right away

(See also S.6.6.8)

Hence, in order to understand an ongoing interaction, a listener must have some knowledge of the general principles of Grice's Cooperative Principle and its maxims, shared factual background information for the interaction and the ability to make inferences.

6.5 The Role of the British Listeners in the Main Corpus

The British listeners who interpreted the utterances in the main corpus were nonparticipants of the oral interviews. They were third persons vis-à-vis the participants, who were first and second persons of the actual experience of the interaction. They listened to the recorded oral interviews and interpreted the students' responses to the interviewers' questions, utterance by utterance sequentially as they heard them. This method of listening (For details, see Chapter Three, S. 3.2.2) imposed some constraints on the process of interpretation, which in turn, I believe, affected the intelligibility of the utterances to a certain extent:

i) Channel of Listening

The channel by which utterances are transmitted plays an important

role in intelligibility. Tape-recording, telephone and other machine operated channels usually place some extra burden on the listener in the process of listening and, thus, affect the degree of intelligibility, especially if the speakers are not native speakers. (See also Chapter Two, S.2.4.3)

As it was, the British listeners were listening to the recorded interviews in which all the interviewees were nonnative speakers. Moreover, when the interviews were in progress, it was very likely that since the interviewers were sitting closer to the tape-recorder than the students, their voices were clearer than those of the students, thus, imposing more burden on the British listeners' perception of the students' utterances.

(ii) Lack of Visual Cues

Since the listeners were only listening to recorded interviews, apart from the verbal codes eg the language used and tone of voice, they lacked all the non-verbal codes, ie visual cues such as gestures, eye-contact, facial expression, body movements etc which would have helped them to understand the interaction better. (See S.6.1.1) Had they been given the opportunity to be with participants and observe them while the interviews were being conducted or had the interviews been video-taped, the degree of intelligibility of the participants' utterances would have been higher.

(iii) Lack of Active Interaction

As the British listeners were nonparticipants, they missed out all the active interactions that the interviewers had with the students. For instance, the interviewer could pick up what the student left unsaid in cases where he deemed it necessary: eg

Interview Three

S: Then, some of them are ... paddy ... paddy...

I: Paddy farmers.

Being nonparticipants, it was impossible for the listeners to do the same.

(iv) No Negotiation of Meaning

As the listeners were provided with 'ready-made' interaction in which correlations between structure and schema had been worked out, no procedural work was required. In other words, it was not possible for them to be involved in negotiation of meaning in order to achieve communicative purpose as the participants did. In Widdowson's (1979:140) words, there is 'interactivity' but without actual 'interaction'. Moreover, it was difficult for the listeners to establish correspondence between the first person's intention and the second person's interpretation as there was no possibility for the listeners to arrive at mutually acceptable meanings by open negotiation. Hence, what they could not understand could not be interpreted and what they could not interpret might affect the interpretation of the utterance that followed. (See also S.6.1.2)

(v) Method of Interpretation and Degree of Intelligibility

In using the procedure of requiring listeners to repeat what the students were saying, there was no way to find out to what extent the listeners understood the moment-by-moment sequencing of the utterances in the interviews. Unlike the grammarian who can 'view a sentence as an enduring structure to be scanned at leisure', the listeners were exposed to an utterance just once and had to register its 'ingredients in just the temporal sequence in which it reached them'. (Hockett, 1961:220) Moreover, unlike a discourse analyst who can analyze the implicatures of utterances in context, reference assignment, recovery of speaker's attitudes etc at his own leisure, the listeners had to work these out on the spur of the moment. It is, thus, not always possible for them to do so. Besides, since the listeners could not predict what the students were going to say next, their interpretation of utterances was based on what they heard at the moment of interaction and they could not readjust their interpretation according to what the student said later. (See also (x) below)

(vi) Intended Meanings of Utterances

The oral interviews were not intended to be listened to by 'naive' native-speakers. Thus, some parts of the exchanges were

not meaningful to the listeners. Grice (1957:385) claims that a particular utterance is to be judged meaningful if an utterance X has meaning when used by a speaker S if and only if, in using that utterance, S intends to produce an effect E in an addressee A and, that S at the same time intends A to recognize his (ie S's) first intention and produce the effect E at least partially on the basis of the recognition of S's intention that he, ie A, produces that effect. Grice also points out that the effect E must be something 'which in some sense is within the control of the audience'.

In other words, if an utterance is not intended for y as 'audience', then, y, who may nonetheless hear the utterance as part of the 'audience' may not be able to grasp the intended meaning of the utterance. The listeners to the oral interviews were, in fact, playing the role of the y 'audience' and, expectedly, some utterances were not understood. (For examples, see S.6.6.6)

(vii) Lack of Shared Knowledge

As the listeners did not share the social, cultural and linguistic knowledge that the interviewers and students shared, the interpretative strategies that they employed were usually context-specific, ie they relied on the context or circumstances in which the utterances were produced. When such context was not explicit or could not be derived from the utterances, very often, they would make a subjective guess or resort to their own previous background knowledge in their interpretation of utterances. (For examples, see S.6.6.1, 6.6.2, 6.6.3)

(viii) Interpretative Strategies and Illocutionary Force

The listeners were under the obligation to repeat exactly, or at least as far as possible, what the students were saying. Thus, they only recognized the linguistic structures that expressed certain propositions and did not interpret the utterances in the light of, say, illocutionary acts. In Austinian terms, locutionary value is at stake, not illocutionary force or perlocutionary effect. (See also Chapter Three, S.3.7.1)

Very often, the listeners interpreted the actual linguistic form by repeating the utterances that the students produced by direct speech, especially in cases when they were confident that they heard the utterances correctly. eg

Int. Five, Utt. 6

S: No, no, Three years.

Int. Two, Utt. 5

S: Yes. Very helpful.

All listeners repeated the actual words used by the students.

In cases where they were not certain whether they heard the utterances correctly or not, they tended to express some degree of doubt, using direct or indirect speech. eg

Int. Four, Utt. 6

S: But Muar is quite famous because Muar they got, they got a bridge ha.

Listener 4, for instance, interpreted it this way: 'I think he said " But Muar is quite famous because in Muar they got richer"'.

Listener 7 interpreted it like this: 'I reckon he said that Muar is quite famous because they got richer'.

There were, however, no indications that the listeners were interpreting what they understood to be illocutionary force of the utterances. Consequently, no utterance was interpreted in the following ways. eg

(i) Int. Five, Utt. 12

S: But next year the off-campus send me to Vancouver of Canada for the course.

Possible interpretation: He predicted (or was quite confident) that off-campus would send him to Vancouver in Canada to do the course.

(ii) Int. Nine, Utt. 12

S: 'Tanjung' ah, 'tanjung', the seaside.

Possible interpretation: He clarified (or explained)
that 'tanjung' means seaside.

(ix) Lack of 'Overall' Context during Interpretation of Utterances

A well-formed utterance may not be interpretable without a more general context, ie it cannot be interpreted unless the listener listens to the subsequent utterance or utterances. The utterance-by-utterance interpretation procedure restricted the listeners from seeing a more general picture of the situation before interpretation was made. Moreover, as this type of utterance interpretation usually does not provide the listeners with 'long-term' memory (See (x) below), when subsequent utterances were heard, very often, the listener had forgotten what he had heard before. eg

Int. Six, Utt. 22, 23, 24, 25

- I: ... Some religious group has already said TV3 is bad.
What do you think about that?
- S: That is depend on er... depend on the... person. Er...
Because if we don't, they don't like the Channel Three...
that means they can change to Channel Two or One.
We cannot comment the Channel Three because...

Listener 6 interpreted the utterances in this way: 'That depends on the person, because if we don't like this territory, we can change to another territory. We cannot comment on Channel Three because ...'. Having failed to get a more general context or remember what she had heard and interpreted before, Listener 6 interpreted 'Channel Three' as 'territory' but interpreted it correctly the second time she heard it.

(x) Immediate Interpretation versus Selective Interpretation

For Widdowson (1979:139), there are two types of utterance interpretation: immediate interpretation and selective interpretation. Immediate interpretation refers to 'the processing of meaning, utterance by utterance, as it emerges sequentially in the discourse', and the procedures which are employed are

to produce 'immediate intake of meaning' and probably relate 'the function of short term memory'. On the other hand, the function of selective interpretation is 'to facilitate communication and to provide a setting for the main information which is to be conveyed'. Thus, some of the meanings the listener or reader perceive are discarded on the ground that they are not important in contributing to the discourse development while others are reconstructed into 'conceptual patterns which may bear little relationship with the pattern of discourse structure within which they were originally presented'. The procedures which are employed are related to existing conceptual patterns and are prepared for storage in long-term memory.

The type of interpretation the British listeners used was more or less the same as the 'immediate interpretation' suggested by Widdowson. Since this type of interpretation usually relies on short term memory, it was very likely that meanings of even important terms, especially those which were unfamiliar to them, did not register in their memory readily. (For examples, see S.6.6.9; cf. Chapter Seven: D.C. Three - Written summary of Interview One: the procedure used may be equivalent to the 'selective interpretation' mentioned above.)

6.6 Analysis of the British Listeners' Interpretation of Utterances in the Main Corpus

Although only the seven British listeners' interpretation of the students' utterances were analyzed and intelligibility problems were mainly analyzed from the perspectives of the students and not the interviewers, the interviewers' questions which elicited information for the students' responses had to be taken into consideration too. None of the listeners seemed to encounter any difficulty in understanding the interviewers' questions and comments.

Phonological, lexical and syntactic errors of the students' speech (See Chapters Four and Five) may be contributory factors to intelligibility problems with the utterances, but other nonlinguistic factors (See below), too, may affect intelligibility.

6.61 Lack of Shared Background or Schematic Knowledge and Intelligibility

Since oral interviews can be considered an institutionalized speech event in which interviewers and interviewees play a particular social role, and the interaction aims at arriving at certain decisions, such speech events have, as it were, become more or less conventionalized. The British listeners, therefore, had no problems in following the discourse structures of the interviews, which was basically composed of question-and-answer sequence. (For details, see Chapter Three, S. 3.7.2.2) In other words, they had the background knowledge of the structure (or textual/formal schemata) of the discourse. (See S.6.4.1) On the other hand, due to cultural differences, they lacked the background or schematic knowledge which the interviewers and the students shared throughout the development of the discourse. In other words, they lacked the content schemata which guided the linguistic representation of events and scenes in the discourse. Hence, when they encountered new experiences, very often, they could not relate them with their knowledge from past experiences. Nearly all the listeners realized that such limitation caused some intelligibility problems in some of the utterances. Some examples are:

(i) Int. Three

I: Beside the river. What sort of things do they do?
What are their jobs?

S: Jobs? Er ... Mostly they are rubber tapper.

Listener 4 interpreted the utterance in this way:

'Jobs? Mostly they are ... It sounds like "rubble double", but it doesn't mean a thing'. When she was told what the student was saying, she admitted, 'Rubber tappers, I wouldn't be familiar with rubber tappers. If it was something I'm familiar with like er... "firemen", I would have understood it. But rubber tappers, I have never heard the word.'

For similar reasons, the other six listeners could not interpret the term correctly either.

(ii) Int. Five

I: So, why is English important? Why do you think it's important for you to improve your English?

S: Because in my future, I think I want to do my future study in my master. So I fail my TOEFL for last time.

Listener 5 asked, 'Why did he say so I fail my "topple" last time? ... What's "topple"?'. When it was explained to her, she admitted that she did not know what 'TOEFL' referred to.

It must have been due to the fact that since 'TOEFL' is not a test conducted by a British Examination Board, the listeners were not familiar with the term and, therefore, could not interpret it correctly. Had an educated American listened to the same utterance, most probably, he would have understood it.

(iii) Int, One

I: How do you find USM so far? Are you enjoying it or are there things you dislike?

S: Other than the Orientation Week I enjoy it la.

Here, the interviewer's first question '... so far' implies that the student must have just joined the University. Yet, the term 'Orientation Week' seemed to be a 'new' experience to all the listeners. Listener 4, for instance, interpreted the utterance as 'I enjoyed it. But I didn't get any of the first bit.' Only Listener 6 asked, 'Was it "Initiation Week"?'. which might be a more familiar term to her.

(iv) In Interview Five, it was evident that all the listeners did not have background knowledge of "off-campus" and, as it were, all of them failed to interpret it although the term was used in the interviewer's question:

I: I see. Can you tell me something about your job in off-campus?

S: Now ... so far ... now I in charge the media production for the off-campus student... (See also S.6.6.9)

(Correlation between lack of schematic knowledge and intelligibility will be investigated in greater detail in D.C. Three, Chapter Seven)

6.6.2 Shared Knowledge, Knowledge of the World and Intelligibility

There is clear evidence that when an appropriate schema against an element in a discourse was activated because it was part of the listener's

pre-existing or prior knowledge, direct interpretation was provided without any extra processing time. To a greater extent, this pre-existing knowledge was either the listener's background experience or knowledge, or common sense knowledge of the world. Hence, shared knowledge plays a crucial role in the interpretation of utterances, for instance, popular American television series and well-known cities in the world.

(i) Int. Eight

I: TV3 doesn't have much sports programme, but are there any programmes that you enjoy?

S: TV programme like Dynasty. (pronounced as [ˈdaɪnəsti])

All the listeners repeated the word 'Dynasty' immediately and without any hesitation. Since they had the shared knowledge, they heard it correctly (although I believe that most British pronounce the word as [ˈdɪnəstɪ])

(ii) Int. Six

I: What programmes (ie TV) do you like?

S: Er ... The Hotel and then some more ... Mag ... Magnum and then ... one... Knight Rider.

All listeners interpreted 'Magnum' correctly and six listeners interpreted 'Knight Rider' correctly. Only Listener 3 interpreted 'Knight Rider' as 'Mad Tiger'. On the other hand, only Listener 4 interpreted 'Hotel' (mispronounced as [hɒtə]) correctly. Listeners 1, 2, 6 and 7 interpreted it as 'The Hotter' but claimed that they had not seen this programme before. Listeners 3 and 5 however, did not attempt to interpret it. It was quite likely that Listener 3 did not watch much television and, thus, did not have shared knowledge of, 'Hotel' and 'Knight Rider'. One of the reasons why four listeners did not hear 'Hotel' correctly could be due to the fact that it was not a very popular series in Britain and as it was shown in the country some years ago, it did not register in the listeners' memory. Hence, they failed to relate 'Hotter' ie what they heard to 'Hotel'.

(iii) Int. Five

I: So you are hoping to go to American to do your MA?

S: I think so. But next year the off-campus send me to Vancouver of Canada for the course.

Six listeners could interpret 'Vancouver' (pronounced as [wenkowə]) because they heard the name of the country 'Canada' correctly. Hence, they employed their knowledge of the world to activate the appropriate schema for their interpretation. Listener 7, for instance, admitted, 'I automatically thought of "Bangkok", but since it's in Canada, so it must be "Vancouver".' It was not certain whether it was because of lack of the knowledge of the world that Listener 5, a nurse, failed to interpret this utterance.

6.6.3 Context, Background knowledge and Intelligibility

In the process of interpretation, when the listeners encountered a new experience, very often, they resorted to their own previous background knowledge and made a subjective guess based on the context in which it occurred. In other words, once they had established a 'frame' from their memory, they began to fill in 'slots' to be 'adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary'. (Minsky, 1975, See S.6.4.1). For instance,

(i) Int, One

I: If I were to visit there, is there anything interesting to see?

S: Er ... Some... there are some places er... like the D.R. Park....

All the seven listeners heard the word 'Park' correctly but could not understand what a 'D.R.' Park was. Thus, having establishing a 'park' frame, they attempted to fill the 'slots' with some features of a park that could be found any-where in the world.

Listener 5, for instance, could not decide on her choice of 'slot' in the beginning, 'Didn't she say Deer Park or Beer Park?' However, she soon made up her mind and interpreted 'D.R.' in the context of a 'typical' park in her 'frame': 'I thought it's a Deer Park where she sees all the animals.'

Likewise, Listener 6 interpreted 'D.R.' in the context of a 'typical' park of her 'frame' : 'There might be a Beer Park, but I think it's a theatre that she is trying to say. But I agree that there's something which sounds like a Beer Park too.' Most probably, Listener 6's 'frame' related Beer Garden to what she heard and so conceived of a park where people could go for a drink when they went to a theatre or some such thing.

Listener 7, however, did not commit himself in his interpretation: 'I thought it might have been a Beer Park. That's what it sounds to me. But I don't know whether I'm right or not.'

(See also Chapter Seven, S.7.3)

(ii) Int. Three

I: Can you describe it (Muar) to me?

S: Er ... There is a river la. We have a river la.
So most people er ... live beside the river.

I: Beside the river. What sort of things do they do?
What are their jobs?

S: Jobs? Mostly they are rubber tapper.

Since all the listeners could understand that 'most people live beside the river', they tended to work out their new experience, 'rubber tapper', around the frame of a 'river'. Here are some of their interpretations:

Listener 7: 'There is something to do with agriculture.'

Listener 6: 'There are vegetables.'

Listener 2: 'Mostly vegetables.'

Listener 1: 'Mostly jungles.'

In cases where the listeners could not establish a 'frame' to work out their new experiences, they usually made a subjective guess, substituting new experiences with something they are familiar with. For instance,

(i) Int. Four

I: You're from Muar. Can you tell me something about Muar?

S: Muar ah, Muar actually is a small town. ... In Muar, they, they have also a er... what... a 'tanjung'.

Listener 6, for instance, substituted her new experience ie the Bahasa Malaysia word 'tanjung' with something she was familiar with, '... In Muar, they also have something ... er... a "banjo"' and asked, 'Is a gramophone on?'

Listener 7 interpreted the utterance in the same manner, 'In Muar, they also have a ... I think he said a "banjo".'

(ii) Int. Three

I: Can you describe it to me?

S: Er... Just a Malay village la.

Strictly speaking, 'villages' were not 'new' experiences to all the listeners. However, it could be that, being city dwellers, 'villages' somehow seemed 'unfamiliar' to them. Four listeners did not interpret the utterance, while the other three interpreted the term by resorting to something they were familiar with:

Listener 5: 'It's in Malaysia.'

Listener 4: 'It sounds like Malaysia, but I'm sure it is not.'

Listener 1: 'This is a place in Malaysia.'

6.6.4 Same Word, Different Contexts and Intelligibility

In investigating why a word is heard correctly in one context and not in another, Miller et al. (1951) found that the most important variable in correct perception is the range of possible alternatives that a word can be interpreted as. (See Chapter Two, S. 2.5.1.5) The finding may be valid, but as far as the data of the present study are concerned, it seems that contextual clues and the interpretability of what precedes and follows the word in question are more important factors determining the intelligibility of the word. For instance,

- (i) In Interview Ten, the word 'help', 'helpless' and 'helping', all pronounced with the same phonological error ie elision of /l/, were heard correctly in one context but not in another. In Exchanges One and Two below, the words 'help' and 'helpless' were heard correctly by all the listeners, but the word 'helping' in Exchange Three could not be

interpreted by nearly all of them.

Exchange One

I: ... What about morally, the moral question if you legalize prostitution?

S: That one because I am not so deeply in... I think children section is more interesting rather than prostitution and so on...

Because children section you can help these people, you know, the abandon child and so on

Apart from the words 'these people' and 'abandon child' which gave explicit contextual clues to the meaning of the word 'help', the fact that all listeners heard 'you can', which precedes 'help' correctly, I believe, contributes to the intelligibility of the word 'help'.

Exchange Two

I: They are more helpless in a sense.

S: Yes. They are more helpless.

The word 'helpless' was totally intelligible to all the listeners because the student was repeating the interviewer's comment which was correctly heard. Hence, the listeners were not exposed to any new information which might cause intelligibility problems. (See also S.6.6.9)

Exchange Three

I: Can you tell me about the job that you did for six years?

S: Yes. Previously, I am doing just in the aid section, just giving aids to the poor people... and then after that I am doing the juvenile cases whereby dealing in courts ah helping all the juvenile delinquency and then I am doing the prostitution side also helping those underage arrested by police when they caught in hotels....

Although the terms 'juvenile delinquency' and 'those underage' could have given some contextual clues to the understanding of the

word 'helping', mishearing or nonhearing of adjacent words ie words preceding and following the word in question created intelligibility problems:

Listeners 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 could not interpret the word 'helping' in both instances because 'whereby dealing in courts ah' and 'those underage' were unintelligible to them. Thus, without the vital clues which preceded or followed the word 'helping', they could not interpret it. Only Listener 6 could interpret the first 'helping' (though she showed some sign of doubt), without understanding 'whereby dealing in courts ah.'

(ii) Int. Two

Exchange One

I: What sort of things do you like about the campus?

What sort of things do you enjoy?

S: Oh! I think I study much in library la.

Exchange Two

I: Nothing. So what do you do for your free time,
leisure time?

S: So... The most time I am in library because I find
the English book very difficult.

The word 'library' (mispronounced as [laɪblə'li]) was not intelligible to any of the listeners in Exchange One, but was intelligible to all of them in Exchange Two.

In Exchange One, Listeners 5 and 7 could not interpret the whole utterance. Listeners 3, 4 and 6 could understand 'study' but not the word preceding 'library' ie 'much' (mispronounced as [matʃ]), which could be the main reason why they could not relate 'study' to 'library'. Listener 2 could interpret the first part of the utterance, 'I think I study maths', but 'study maths' did not help her to understand the word 'library' either. Another reason could have been that the listeners did not expect that 'studying in library' was something that the student enjoyed doing.

On the other hand, in Exchange Two, 'most time' and 'because I find the English book very difficult' which were correctly heard by all

the listeners provided ample contextual clues to the intelligibility of the word 'library' : Since he found English books very difficult, that was the reason why he spent his free time studying in the 'library'.

- (iii) The word 'three' (mispronounced as [t̃ri] in all the three examples given below) was correctly heard by all the listeners in this exchange:

Int. Five

I: So you have been working for USM for seven years.

S: No, no. Three years

The context in which 'three' occurred was explicit : 'NO, no' clearly implies that it was not 'seven' years but another numeral, hence, limiting the range of possibility of interpretation. (Miller's findings, Chapter Two, S.2.5.1.5)

On the other hand, the 'three' in the following two exchanges which occurred in contexts which were unfamiliar to the listener cause intelligibility problems to some listeners.

Int. Eight

I: Which 'Desa' are you living in?

S: I am living in 'Desa Swasta', Block Ten, Room number three.

Only two listeners who could understand 'Block Ten' heard the word 'three' correctly. The main cause of the intelligibility problem was because the listeners could not understand what 'Desa Swasta' was. (2)

Int. Six

I: Which 'Desa' are you staying in?

S: Desa Permai, three five seven.

For similar reasons only two listeners heard the word 'three' correctly.

6.6.5 Cohesion and Intelligibility

In a face-to-face interaction, cohesion is very important if meanings are to be easily exchanged. In other words, for conversational

sequences to be readily intelligible, there must be relationships within the discourse which occur when the understanding of one linguistic element is possible by reference to another. As Halliday and Hasan (1976:2) put it, 'The interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it.' (See also Chapter Three, S.3.7.1)

Generally speaking, utterances with presupposition which can be recovered from a preceding utterance were intelligible to all the listeners. For instance, since the relevance of presuppositions was clear in the following exchanges, the utterances were intelligible to all the listeners:

(i) Int. One (presuppositions of ellipsis)

I: Have you visited the beaches in Penang?

S: Yes, (I visited the beaches in Penang) when I
visiting my relatives.

Here, the propositional relationship is established by means of formal links between the question and the answer through ellipsis, ie I visited the beaches in Penang. In other words, the two utterances are cohesive because a formal link can be established between them by invoking the presupposed proposition 'have visited the beaches'.

(ii) Int. Five (presuppositions of conjunctions)

I: Can you tell me why you want to attend the class?

S: Because I... I think I am very poor in English
especially in spoken.

Here again, the interpretation of the answer is dependent on the relationⁱⁿ which it stands to the question. The cohesive link[^] 'because' expresses meaning which presupposes the presence of other components in the question, ie 'Why you want to attend the class?'

(iii) Int. Six (presuppositions of reference/substitution)

I: How about the size of the room? How big is it?

S: Mm... It's quite okay lah. Quite big and com-
fortable for us.

The cohesive link 'it' in the response refers anaphorically to 'the room' in the question, ie the word 'it' presupposes 'the room', the presupposition provides cohesion between the question and the answer.

The examples given above indicate that the use of correct cohesive devices between utterances or utterance sequence helped the listeners to interpret utterances correctly.

On the other hand, the use of wrong or inappropriate cohesive links between utterances or utterance sequence may affect intelligibility. For instance,

(i) Int. Three

I: Can you tell me why you'd like to take this course?

S: Because I am very poor in English la. Then feel very ashame er... Because already in university, then cannot speak English very well. Not very well, also very poor la.

All the listeners heard the first utterance of the student's reply correctly: the cohesive link 'because' was used correctly to introduce the reason asked in the question, 'why you'd like to take this course'. However, nearly all the listeners had problems interpreting the rest of the utterance. In my opinion, the choice of wrong cohesive links and 'missing links' (ie missing subject) within the utterances contributed most to the intelligibility problem. Had the cohesive links 'then'; 'then'; 'not' and 'also' be replaced with 'and then' or 'and'; 'but' or 'yet'; 'not only' and 'but also' respectively, without altering the rest of the structure of the utterance, I believe, the degree of intelligibility would have been higher. Undoubtedly, if 'missing subjects' had been supplied on top of that, eg 'Because I'm very poor in English and I feel very ashamed because I'm already in University, yet I can't speak English very well. Not only that I can't speak it well, but I'm also very poor in it', the listeners would have understood them. (3)

(ii) Int. Seven

I: Why do you think it's important for you to improve your English?

S: Because in my future, I think I want to do my future study in my master. So I fail my TOEFL for last time.

No listeners seemed to have difficulty interpreting the first part of the reply, 'because in my future' because the cohesive link 'because' was correctly used. However, apart from the lack of shared knowledge about 'TOEFL' (See S.6.6.1) which caused the main intelligibility problem, the wrong cohesive link 'so' might also have puzzled the listeners. Had the cohesive link 'but' been used or had the utterance been rephrased as 'So I took the TOEFL but I failed last time', the degree of intelligibility might have been higher.

(iii) Int. Ten

I: What about morally, the moral question if you legalize prostitution? Isn't there a moral question?

S: That one because I am not so deeply in...

None of the listeners could interpret this utterance correctly because it is not possible for them to recover from the interviewer's question what 'that one' referred to. Neither could the cohesive link 'because' relate to the interviewer's question. Thus, it might have seemed 'incoherent' to them. (See also S.6.6.6)

6.6.6 Coherence and Intelligibility

Since the oral interviews were not intended to be listened to by the British listeners who did not have shared knowledge with the participants, some parts of the exchanges did not seem to 'make sense' or seem 'coherent' to them. This happened because the listeners failed to take account of presuppositions the cultural and social knowledge shared by the participants or failed to arrive at the 'implicatures' used in the exchanges. (See S.6.4.2)

Some examples are:

(i) Int. One

I: What's wrong with the Orientation Week?

S: The seniors are so... they are so chil... fussy er... asking all the things like that.

There is no cohesive link in this exchange. The two utterances (ie question and answer) in combination will only make sense to listeners who can perceive the extralinguistic elements implied between the participants. In other words, to understand what was going on in the interaction, the listeners had to have certain bits of social and cultural knowledge: eg They must be aware that the interview took place in the beginning of an academic year of the University; they must realize that Orientation Week is the first week of the university academic year; they must know that the student was a new student; they must also know that it is a common practice in the University that the seniors (ie students already in the University) usually play harmless practical jokes on new students. Without this kind of knowledge, the listeners failed to see the relevance between 'seniors' in the response and 'Orientation Week' in the question. Only Listener 5 interpreted the word 'seniors' without any hesitation. Listeners 1 and 2 could interpret it, but they were doubtful why the word 'senior' was used. Other listeners could not interpret it at all.

(ii) Int. Six

- I: So, how do you find USM so far? Enjoying it?
 S: Er... I cannot say like that. Still I feel nervous to contact seniors and most probably I take two or one month for....

For reasons similar to those mentioned in examples (i) above, three listeners could not interpret the word 'seniors', two interpreted it wrongly and the other two who could were wondering why he was 'nervous' to contact 'seniors'.

One of the assumptions that listeners always have is that when someone is saying something, what he says is meant to be informative and relevant. Thus, when presented with two apparently quite disconnected utterances, they proceed on the assumption that the information expressed in the second utterance must be relevant in some way to the information expressed in the first. This relevance may not be signalled by linguistic clues, and if that is so, listeners create an extralinguistic situation which

will supply the deficiency. Failure to do so will result in intelligibility problems. For instance,

(iii) Int. Two

I: (1) So.. The most time I am in library because
I find the English book very difficult. (2)
I, I cannot study la. (3) I must find the..
... er.... dictionary..... a long time.

All listeners heard utterances 1 and 2 in the above example correctly, but ~~only~~ two listeners interpreted utterance 3 correctly. Utterances 2 and 3 were 'apparently' unrelated: What has 'must find the dictionary a long time' to do with 'cannot study'? Only Listener 6 interpreted the two utterances in a 'related' manner by creating an extralinguistic situation, 'He can't study because he has to spend a lot of time checking words in dictionaries. Oh, Poor boy!' Listener 4, however, did not get the intended meaning of the student, 'It wasn't very clear, but I understood what he meant. He said, "I must find the dictionary, but he said [disənəli].'

(iv) In cases when the listeners had no difficulty working out the 'implicature' used by the participants, the utterances would seem coherent and were, hence, intelligible to them. For instance,

Int. Seven

I: You're off-campus student?
S: No, full time.

The implication here was that 'off-campus' students were part-time students. From this, they could infer that 'since the student was a full-time student, he must be doing a course on campus.'

6.6.7 Coherence, Discourse Organization and Intelligibility

Gumperz (1979 (a)) and Young (1982) found that it was difficult for native speakers of English to follow the discourse organization of some Asian languages such as Indian and Chinese which tend to only bring in the most important and relevant points towards the end

of a reply to a question. (See S.6.2.3) They claim that this kind of discourse organization sounds irrelevant and incoherent to English listeners. Very few responses of the students in the interviews manifest this discourse organization feature. There is, however, no evidence indicating that the listeners encountered difficulty in understanding the students' replies which showed some sign of this feature. For instance,

(i) Int Three (Chinese)

I: Why do you think English is important for your future?

S: Er... When I small... I don't know the able to know English. Now, now er... after secondary, feel what I see and what I heard er... then I found English very important.

For all listeners, the main intelligibility problem only occurred in this part of the utterance, 'after secondary feel' with missing cues 'after secondary school, I feel...' The discourse convention is putting the most relevant points towards the end of the reply, did not seem to affect intelligibility.

(ii) Int. Six (Indian)

I: Some religious group has already said TV3 is bad. What do you think about that?

S: That is depend on er... depend on the ... person. Er... Because if we don't, they don't like the Channel Three, that means they can change to Channel Two or One. We cannot comment the Channel Three because Channel Three is er.... is only purpose for commercial. So we cannot comment anything about that.

None of the listeners had any difficulty following the development of the discourse which had the most relevant point given at the end of the reply. The part of the discourse which was unintelligible to all the listeners was 'purpose for commercial' and it was most probably due to the lexical error 'purpose'.

(See Chapter Five, S.5.3.7)

6.6.8 Coherence, Decontextualized Discourse and Intelligibility

It is generally agreed that one must take into account the circumstances or context in which an utterance is produced in order to interpret its realized meaning in a discourse. Widdowson (1979:116), for instance, claims that 'the decontextualization of language data yields the isolated sentence whose meaning is self-contained.'

Interviews Three , Four, Six and Ten began with the students' replies because the interviewers' questions were not recorded. In these 'decontextualized' situations, although the 'isolated sentences' had 'self-contained' meanings, the listeners had no difficulty interpreting them unless the utterances contained some unfamiliar element or if the key word was mispronounced. For instance,

(i) Int. Six

S: Some of them just...

The utterance was correctly heard by all the listeners although they did not know what 'them' referred to. The presupposition 'latent' in this utterance could not be recovered from the next question either:

I: What sort of things do they do?

S: They ask where I come from. How many people in my family.

All the listeners could understand these utterances too. Judging from the student's reply and the questions asked in the earlier interviews they had heard, some listeners might have been able to provide a context for the 'decontextualized' utterance. eg 'How do you find the seniors?' or 'What sort of impression do you have of the seniors?'

(ii) Int. Ten

S: But then my hometown is Kedah.

Though out of context, the utterance was interpreted correctly by all listeners. Again, it was not difficult for the listeners to construct an appropriate context. eg

I: (I notice that you had some working experience.
Where were you working?

S: I was working in K.L.), but then my home-town is
Kedah.

(iii) Int. Four

S: English is important because er... in Malaysia,
there are, they are people, they are a lot of people...

It would be easy to create a context for the student's reply if the first part of the utterance was heard correctly. eg 'Why do you think English is very important?' The main reason why three listeners could not interpret 'English is important' was, in my opinion, because they could not understand the key word 'English' which was mispronounced as [ɪŋɡlɪs]. However, if the interviewer's question (assuming that it was 'Why do you think English is very important?') had been heard, the listeners would have understood the contribution from the student without difficulty.

(iv) Int. Three

S: You mean my village ah?

None of the listeners understood this utterance. Since there was no intonation error (it was spoken with rising tone), in my opinion, apart from being 'decontextualized', the main contributory factor to the intelligibility problem was because the listeners were not familiar with the key word 'village' which was mispronounced as [wɪlətʃ]. Had the utterance been 'You mean my home-town ah?', most probably, some if not all the listeners would have understood it. One can prove this point as when the discourse proceeds,

I: Yes. Can you describe it to me?

S: Er... Just a Malay village la.

still none of the listeners could interpret 'village' correctly. The term was not used again in the subsequent utterances. Hence, it was not certain at what point the listeners could have interpreted it correctly if it had been used again.

6.6.9 New/Old Information and Intelligibility

Generally speaking, when the listeners were exposed to a certain lexical item a second time when they did not hear it correctly the first time, ie it was presented as 'old information' to them now,

the degree of intelligibility was higher. (See also Chapter Four, S.4.4)
For instance,

In Interview Three, none of the listeners could interpret 'rubber tapper' and 'paddy' correctly when they heard the terms the first time. However, when the interviewer repeated what the student had said, they were intelligible to all the listeners.

S: Jobs? Mostly they are rubber tapper. (Not intelligible)

I: Rubber tappers. (Intelligible)

S: Then some of them are paddy ...er... paddy (Not intelligible)

I: Paddy farmers?

S: Paddy, paddy farmers. (Intelligible)

There is, however, no clear evidence that 'old information' always gave rise to a higher degree of intelligibility. For instance, in Interview Five, none of the listeners could interpret the term 'off-campus' when they heard it the first time in the student's reply although the interviewer had already used the term twice:

I: Then you came straight to off-campus?

I: Can you tell me something about your job in off-campus?

S: Now... so far... now I in charge the media production for the off-campus student. (Not intelligible)

After the listeners heard it the fourth time in the interviewer's question,

I: So you have always been in the off-campus unit?

and it was used by the student again;

S: But next year the off-campus send me to Vancouver of Canada for the course.

there were still five listeners who could not interpret the term, the fifth time they heard it. It was, however, intelligible to all the listeners when they heard it the sixth and last time.

S: Media, media production for the off-campus. (intelligible)

Thus, one may assume that new experience ie unfamiliar elements in discourse do not register readily in one's memory. Moreover, the

utterance-by-utterance presentation which only involved the use of short-term memory for listeners (See S.6.5) did not enable the listeners to remember such terms readily.

Sometimes, once the listeners thought that they had activated an appropriate schema against which they provided a discourse interpretation, the interpretation remained consistent throughout the discourse. For instance,

In Interview Ten, when the word 'section' (mispronounced as ['seʃən]) was heard incorrectly the first time, the interpretation remained unchanged when the term was heard again in subsequent utterances:

S: Previously, I am doing just in the aid section. (Utt. 21)

S: Because when I went to K.L., I choose I have chosen this children section. (Utt. 40)

S: I think children section is more interesting rather than prostitution and so on. (Utt. 41)

S: Because children section you can help these people, you know, the abandon child and so on. (Utt. 42)

Quite expectedly, Listeners 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7 interpreted 'section' as 'session' in all instances, while Listeners 3 and 5 interpreted the word correctly in all cases. Thus, there must certainly be a minimum of segmental correctness to ensure intelligibility in some cases, and there is probably some effect from 'set' once an item has been interpreted in a particular way.

6.6.10 'Error Correction' and Interpretation

As was discussed in Section 6.5, it was not possible for the listeners to negotiate meanings or repair the students' speech in order to achieve communicative purposes. It was, therefore, not necessary for the listeners to correct the errors in the students' speech. However, in many cases, the listeners did correct the students' utterances involuntarily, ie without their own knowledge. Had they done it intentionally, they would have placed the primary accent (4) or tonic syllable on the item they had corrected. Very often, it was other elements in the corrected utterance which had been highlighted. Some examples are:

(i) Int. Six, Utt. 15

S: In my area, can.

Listeners 1, 2, 3 and 7 interpreted it as 'In my Area, you CAN.'

Listener 4 interpreted it as 'In my Area, I CAN.'

Listeners 5 and 6, however, did not 'correct' the error.

(ii) Int. Three, Utt. 16

S: Er... when I small ... I don't know the able to
know English.

Listeners 1, 2 and 5 interpreted it as 'when I was SMALL, I don't know the imPORtance of English.'

Listener 3 interpreted it as 'When I was SMALL, I don't know ORDinary English.'

Listener 4 interpreted it as 'When I was SMALL, I didn't know the imPORtance of English.'

(iii) Int. Eight, Utt. 17

S: Four of us, included me.

Six listeners interpreted it as 'FOUR of us, including ME.'

Only Listener 6 did not 'correct' the error.

(iv) Int. One, Utt. 19

S: So far I haven't see a beaches.

Six listeners interpreted it as 'So far I haven't seen any BEAches.'

Listener 4 interpreted it as 'So far I only see BEAches.'

Occasionally, some listeners recognized the grammatical errors in the students' utterances while some others were not certain whether they heard the utterances correctly or not. For instance,

(v) Int. One, Utt. 23

S: I haven't think of it.

Listeners 1 and 3 were not certain whether 'think' was the word they heard while Listener 4 could not interpret it. Listeners 2, 5, 6 and 7, however, realized that it was an error and pointed out that the student should have said 'I haven't THOUGHT about it yet.'

On the other hand, quite a few listeners pointed out the students' pronunciation errors. For instance,

(vi) Int. Two, Utt. 11

S: I must find the ...er... dictionary [dɪsənə'li].

Listener 4, for instance, said 'It wasn't very clear but I understood what he meant. He said, "I must find the DICTIONary but he said [dɪsənə'li].'

(vii) Int. Two, Utt. 9

S: So... The most time I am in library [laɪblə'li].

Listener 6, for instance, said 'I think he said "The most time I'm in the LIbrary." Oh! He couldn't pronounce the r sound.'

6.6.11 Long/Short Utterances and Intelligibility

On the whole, shorter utterances were usually correctly interpreted by all the listeners. eg

(i) Int. One, Utt. 24

S: I major ... I majoring Chemistry.

(ii) Int. Four, Utt. 16

S: No, no. I stay outside.

However, shorter utterances with unfamiliar elements were usually not heard correctly by all the listeners. eg

(i) Int. Three, Utt. 1

S: You mean my village ah?

(ii) Int. Seven, Utt. 3

S: The MARA

In addition, shorter sentences with multiple grammatical errors (See Chapter Five, S.5.3.3) were generally not understood by all the listeners. eg

Int. Two, Utt. 2

S: And for the games er... a bit only la.

On the other hand, longer utterances with only one or two error types 1-14 (See Chapter Five, S.5.2.3) were usually understood

by all the listeners. eg

Int. Seven , Utt. 17, 18

S: Oh, yes. But before that, I had been here for one month, 1980, under the sponsored by my department, the programme of Institute of Management.

To sum up, apart from linguistic errors, nonlinguistic elements, too, play an important role in the intelligibility of speech.

In Chapters Four and Five, I have discussed linguistic elements that affected intelligibility and in this Chapter, I have looked at nonlinguistic elements that affected intelligibility. In the next chapter, I shall examine all the utterances rated -h and --h in the main corpus to determine the possible cause of intelligibility problems ie whether lack of intelligibility arises at the segmental, suprasegmental, syntactic, lexical or discourse level.

Notes

- (1) D.k. stands for the initials of the builder of the Park, Doctor Dharma Raja Seenivasagam and the Park is more commonly known to the residents in Ipoh as D.R. Park.
- (2) 'Desa' is a Bahasa Malaysia word meaning 'Kampung', a Malaysian style village. It is used here for the names of university hostels.
- (3) (i) The structure of the student's utterances is, in fact, direct translation from his Li, Chinese. (See also Chapter Eight, S.8.3.3.4);
 (ii) Cohesive links within utterances such as 'missing subjects' were discussed in Chapter Five, categorized under error type 7 as syntactic errors.
- (4) The primary accent (or accents) in a sentence is shown by initiating a change of pitch direction, with the nucleus (falling, rising or a combination of the two) on the appropriate syllable of the word (or words) on which attention is particular to be concentrated. (Gimson 1970:268)

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONSOLIDATION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, each utterance rated -h or --h in Data Collection One will be examined as a whole in order to determine the likely cause of intelligibility problems, ie whether lack of intelligibility is due to segmental, suprasegmental, lexical or syntactic errors or whether it is due to some nonlinguistic factors. Before certain criteria can be established, it is, perhaps, better to examine the findings of Data Collection Two and Three first, as it is believed that the findings in these two pieces of data collections will, in one way or another, support or reinforce the findings in Data Collection One discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six. Hence, more solid evidence can be obtained to determine the likely cause of intelligibility problems in the utterances rated -h and --h in Data Collection One, the main corpus.

7.1 Data Collection Two (a) : Reading of Words in Isolation

7.1.1 Aims of D.C. Two (a)

The aims of this piece of data collection are:

- (i) to investigate what kind of segmental errors in words read in isolation are intelligible and unintelligible to British listeners;
- (ii) to investigate whether words with stress errors read in isolation are intelligible or unintelligible to British listeners;
- (iii) to attempt to relate the degree of intelligibility of mispronounced words read in isolation and the same words used in context;
- (iv) to attempt to relate the degree of intelligibility of mispronounced words heard by British listeners and the same words by Malaysian listeners.

7.1.2 Subjects, Material and Method

Subjects

Three British listeners (ie Listeners 17, 18 and 19), and three Malaysians (ie Listeners 20, 21 and 22) were involved in this piece of data collection. (For details, see Chapter Three, S. 3.1.2.2)

Material

Twenty-four words, taken from the ten oral interviews in D.C. One, which contained the subjects' problem phonemes, were read by three of the ten subjects in the oral interviews , ie Subject Two (Chinese), Subject Six (Indian) and Subject Ten (Malay), and the readings were recorded. A detailed transcription of their readings is as follows:

Table 7.1 List of words and their transcription in D.C. Two (a)

No.	Word	Pronunciation of		
		Chinese subject	Malay subject	Indian subject
1	first	[fəs]	[fəs]	[fəs]
2	tense	[tens]	[tens]	[tens]
3	aid	[et]	[ed]	[et]
4	dictionary	[di ʔnə'li]	[diʃə'nəri]	[diʃən'ri]
5	service	[sə'wis]	[sə'wis]	[sə'vis]
6	village	[wiletʃ]	[wiletʃ]	[viletʃ]
7	recreation	[rikreʃən]	[rikreʃən]	[rekreʃən]
8	nervous	[nə'wəs]	[nə'wəs]	[nə'vəs]
9	game	[gem]	[gem]	[gem]
10	thing	[tiŋ]	[tiŋ]	[tiŋ]
11	resort	[ri'sɔt]	[ri'zɔt]	[ri'sɔt]
12	language	[læŋ'gwetʃ]	[læŋ'gwetʃ]	[læŋ'gvetʃ]
13	seniors	[si'niəs]	[si'niəs]	[si'niəs]
14	field	[fild]	[fild]	[fild]
15	lack	[læk]	[læk]	[læk]
16	basic	[be'sik]	[be'sik]	[be'sik]
17	library	[laɪbə'ri]	[laɪbrəri]	[laɪbrə'ri]
18	bridge	[britʃ]	[britʃ]	[britʃ]
19	probably	[prə'bli]	[prəbələli]	[prəbələli]
20	town	[taun]	[taun]	[taun]
21	tourist	[tə'ris]	[tə'ris]	[tə'ris]
22	pay	[pe]	[pe]	[pe]
23	also	[bso]	[bso]	[b'so]
24	there	[dɛə]	[dɛə]	[dɛə]

Method

The method of listening was the same as that of D.C. One, i.e. the listeners repeated the words orally, whether they heard them correctly or incorrectly or told the researcher the words which were 'unheard' i.e. it was reported as uninterpretable. (For details, see Chapter Three, S.3.2.2)

7.1.3 Results and Discussion

Assumption: Words with segmental errors used in discourse are generally more intelligible than the same words read in isolation.

Malaysian Listeners

As the Malaysian listeners were used to Malaysian pronunciation, most of the mispronounced words in D.C. Two (a) were intelligible to them. Only a few words were misheard:

- (i) Listener 20 (Chinese) listened to the Malay subject's reading:
Only one word 'bridge' was misheard as 'reach'.
- (ii) Listener 21 (Malay) listened to the Indian subject's reading:
Two words were misheard : (a) 'aid' was heard 'ate', (b) 'village' was heard 'release'.
- (iii) Listener 22 (Indian) listened to the Chinese subject's reading:
Three words were misheard:
(a) 'aid' was heard 'eat';
(b) 'town' was heard 'down';
(c) 'bridge' was heard 'bitch'.

Apart from the word 'village', all the words which were misheard were monosyllabic words.

British Listeners

Listener 17 listened to the words read by the Indian subject:
Most of the words were intelligible to her except the following:

- (a) 'aid' was heard 'ate';
- (b) the words 'service', 'nervous', 'tourist' and 'thing' were unintelligible to her.

Listener 18 listened to the words read by the Chinese subject:

The words which were misheard were as follows:

- (a) 'tense' was heard 'dense';
- (b) 'tourist' was heard 'Doris';
- (c) 'town' was heard 'down';
- (d) 'thing' was heard 'dee';
- (e) 'resort' was heard 'result';
- (f) 'field' was heard 'few';
- (g) 'pay' was heard 'bay';
- (h) 'bridge' was heard 'beach';
- (i) 'aid' was heard 'it'.

Listener 19 listened to the words read by the Malay subject:

The following words were misheard:

- (a) 'village' was heard 'manage';
- (b) 'recreation' was heard 'repletion',
- (c) 'town' was heard 'down';
- (d) 'resort' was heard 'result';
- (e) 'field' was heard 'fill';
- (f) 'aid' was heard 'ate';
- (g) 'bridge' was heard 'beach'.

The word 'thing' was unintelligible.

Like the Malaysian listeners, most of the words which were misheard or 'unheard' were monosyllabic words.

On the whole, isolated words with the following segmental errors were intelligible to the British listeners. Apart from (iii) and (iv) below, similar segmental errors in words used in context, ie in the oral interviews did not seem to affect intelligibility at the segmental level either: (See also Chapter Four, S.4.3.8 and 4.3.9)

- (i) Reduction of consonant clusters in final position. eg /st/ → /s/ as in 'first':
 - (a) in isolation: it was heard correctly by all the three British listeners.
 - (b) in context: eg 'And for the first, first July' (Int. Five, Utt.4): it was intelligible to all the seven British listeners.
 - (c) results: a parallel.
- (ii) Replacement of /z/ by /s/ for plural morphemes. eg in the word 'seniors':
 - (a) in isolation: it was intelligible to all the three listeners.
 - (b) in context: eg 'Still I feel nervous to contact seniors' (Int. Six, Utt. 28): it was heard correctly by two listeners, misheard by two and 'unheard' by three listeners.
 - (c) results: a contrast; but the main cause of the intelligibility problem of the word used in context did not lie in the articulation of the word but lack of shared sociocultural knowledge. (See Chapter Six, S.6.6.1)
- (iii) Elision of a phoneme. eg in the word 'dictionary':
 - (a) in isolation: it was heard correctly by all the three listeners.
 - (b) in context: 'I must find the er...dictionary' (Int. Two, Utt. 11): it was heard correctly by one listener, misheard by two and 'unheard' by four listeners.
 - (c) results: a contrast; the main cause of the intelligibility problem of the word used in context probably lay in

both the articulation of the word and the wrong word choice 'find'. (See App. F)

(iv) Elision of a syllable. eg in the word 'probably':

- (a) in isolation (only Chinese Subject): it was heard correctly by Listener 18.
- (b) in context: 'Most probably I take two or one month for ...' (Int. Six, Utt. 28): it was heard correctly by five listeners and 'unheard' by two.
- (c) results: a parallel; the main cause of the intelligibility problem of the word used in context did not lie in the articulation of the word because it was the whole utterance which was unintelligible to the two listeners. (See App. F)

It has to be pointed out that other words with similar errors used in context, eg 'ambassador', 'rehabilitate' etc caused considerable intelligibility problems to British listeners. (See App. F)

On the other hand, isolated words with the following segmental errors were sometimes not intelligible to some of the listeners. Apart from monosyllabic words, words with similar errors did not generally affect intelligibility when used in context:

- (i) The shortening of pure vowels. eg /i:/ → /ɪ/ in monosyllabic words, as in 'field':
 - (a) in isolation: it was heard 'few' and 'fill' by two of the three listeners.
 - (b) in context: 'So I think I am going into the management field la' (Int. One, Utt. 26): it was intelligible to five listeners and unintelligible to two.
 - (c) results: a parallel.
- (ii) The shortening of pure vowels. eg /ɔ:/ → /ʊ/ in disyllabic words, as in 'resort':
 - (a) in isolation: it was heard 'result' by two listeners.
 - (b) in context: '... a resort where people will spend their leisure times there' (Int. Four, Utt. 9): it was intelligible to all the seven listeners.
 - (c) results: a contrast.
- (iii) Monophthongization of diphthongs. eg /eɪ/ → /e/ in monosyllabic words, especially in words without correct consonant clues affected intelligibility with or without context, as in the word 'aid':

- (a) in isolation: it was heard 'ate' by two listeners and 'it' by one listener.
 - (b) in context: 'Previously I am doing just in the aid section' (Int. Ten, Utt. 19): it was heard correctly by one listener, misheard as 'eat' by another and was 'unheard' by five listeners.
 - (c) results: a parallel.
- (iv) Monophthongization of diphthongs. eg /eI/→/e/ in monosyllabic words with correct consonant clues were, however, heard correctly, as in 'game':
- (a) in isolation: it was intelligible to all the three listeners.
 - (b) in context: 'And for the games er.... a bit only la.' (Int. Two, Utt. 2): it was heard 'ink' by one listener and unintelligible to six listeners.
 - (c) results: a contrast; but the main cause of the intelligibility problem of the word used in context did not lie in the articulation of the word but in syntactic errors in the utterance. (See Chapter Five, S.5.3.3)
- (v) Monophthongization of diphthongs. eg /eI/→/e/ in disyllabic words did not seem to affect intelligibility with or without context, as in the word 'basic':
- (a) in isolation: it was intelligible to all the three listeners.
 - (b) in context: 'Under the Basic Management programme' (Int. Seven, Utt. 19): it was intelligible to all the seven listeners.
 - (c) results: a parallel.
- (vi) Replacement of voiced consonant phonemes by their voiceless counterparts affected intelligibility in monosyllabic words, especially when it occurred in the final positions. eg in the word 'bridge':
- (a) in isolation: it was heard 'beach' by two listeners.
 - (b) in context: 'Muar they got, they got a bridge ha' (Int. Four, Utt. 6): it was heard correctly by four listeners, misheard as 'rich' or 'richer' by three.
 - (c) results: a parallel.
- (vii) Unaspirated voiceless plosives in initial positions in monosyllabic words affected intelligibility with or without context, as in 'tense':
- (a) in isolation: it was heard 'dense' by one listener.

- (b) in context: 'I feel the air around K.L. is so tense la' (Int. One, Utt. 15): it was heard correctly by three listeners, misheard as 'dense' by two and 'unheard' by another two.
- (c) results: a parallel.
- (viii) Unaspirated voiceless plosives in initial positions in disyllabic words affected intelligibility in isolated words, as in 'tourist':
 - (a) in isolation: it was unintelligible to one listener and misheard as 'Doris' by another.
 - (b) in context: 'Not many tourist places to go la' (Int. One, Utt. 3): it was intelligible to all the seven listeners.
 - (c) results: a contrast.
- (ix) Replacement of /v/ by /w/ (Chinese and Malay subjects) and /ð/ (Indian subject) seemed to affect intelligibility to some extent, as in 'village':
 - (a) in isolation: it was heard 'manage' by one listener.
 - (b) in context: 'You mean my village ah?' (Int. Three, Utt. 1): it was unintelligible to all the seven listeners.
 - (c) results: a parallel; apart from the segmental error, the main cause of the intelligibility problem of the word in context lay in the listeners' unfamiliarity with the word in question. (See Chapter Six, S.6.6.3)
- (x) Replacement of /θ/ by /t̪/ (unaspirated) in isolated monosyllabic words affected intelligibility. eg in the word 'think':
 - (a) in isolation: it was heard 'dee' by one listener and unintelligible to two listeners.
 - (b) in context: 'I think I like Penang better than K.L.' (Int. One, Utt. 12): it was intelligible to all the seven listeners.
 - (c) results: a contrast.

Moreover, when words were used in isolation, stress errors did not seem to affect intelligibility. eg the words 'seniors', 'dictionary', 'library' etc were correctly heard, irrespective of whether there was a stress error or not.

In conclusion, isolated words with segmental errors seemed to affect intelligibility more than the same words used in context. This finding supports the assumption that words with segmental errors used in discourse are generally more intelligible than the same words read in isolation. Disyllabic or polysyllabic words with segmental errors were, generally speaking, more intelligible than monosyllabic words.

The same findings could be noted in Chapter Four when words were used in context.

7.2 Data Collection Two (b): Reading of Isolated Sentences

7.2.1 Aims of D.C. Two (b)

The aims of this piece of data collection are:

- (i) to attempt to relate the intelligibility of syntactically erroneous sentences and that of their corrected counterparts;
- (ii) to attempt to relate the intelligibility of lexically erroneous sentences and that of their corrected counterparts;
- (iii) to attempt to relate the intelligibility of sentences with single errors and that of those with multiple errors;
- (iv) to attempt to relate the intelligibility of syntactically erroneous sentences when read in isolation and that of their counterparts in discourse.

7.2.2 Subjects, Material and Method

Subjects

The same subjects involved in D.C. Two(a) took part in D.C. Two (b).

Material and Method

Fifteen syntactically erroneous and three lexically erroneous sentences, all taken from the ten oral interviews, together with their corrected version, were read by five of the ten subjects who took part in the interviews and the readings were recorded. (See Chapter Three, S.3.1.2.2) As far as possible, each of the subjects read his own erroneous sentences and the corrected version. The recordings were edited in such a way that the same listener did not listen to both the erroneous sentences and the corrected counterparts. (See App. B(2))

The method of listening was the same as D.C. One, ie the listeners repeated the sentences orally, whether they heard them correctly or incorrectly, or told the researcher that part of or the whole sentence was unintelligible to them.

It must be pointed out that in order to achieve as close a relation as possible between the erroneous sentences and the corrected version, correction was done minimally. (Table 7.2)

7.2.3 Results and Discussion

Table 7.2 Erroneous sentences and the corrected counterparts in B.C. Two (b)

No.	Erroneous sentences	No.	Corrected version
1 a)	And for the games, a bit only la. (E.T. 1,7,12,13)	1(b)	As for games, I only play a bit.
2(a)	Because some books ah got fews only E.T.14,16)	2(b)	Because some books have a few copies only.
3 a)	Sports I watch it and some badminton. (E.T. 8)	3(b)	I watch sports and some badminton.
4(a)	And then home ah, at home ah, it is horrible. (E.T. 17,18)	4(b)	And then it's horrible at home.
5(a)	Every time you go you feel so low walking in the street la. (E.T. 12)	5(b)	Every time you go there, you feel so low walking in the street.
6(a)	The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park. (E.T. 1,13)	6(b)	D.R. stands for the builder of the Park.
7 a)	At time there was a zoo inside la but they are close some because of lack of fund. E.T. 9,14,15)	7(b)	There used to be a zoo inside but it's closed now because of lack of fund.
8(a)	Their language, their spoken language that means if we want to talk with them or communicate with them, we have to use English. (E.T. 15)	8(b)	That means if we want to talk with them or communicate with them, we have to use spoken English.
9 a)	Can said it very known in Malaysia la. (E.T. 4,17)	9(b)	It can be said to be very well-known in Malaysia.
10(a)	Just only I spend two hours or one hours watching television. (E.T. 10,12,15,17)	10(b)	I just spend one or two hours watching television.
11(a)	The life in town areas and as well if compared to often the rural people. (E.T. 12,15)	11(b)	The life of the town people compared with the life of the rural people.
12(a)	Now I in charge the media production. (E.T. 1,11)	12(b)	Now I'm in charge of the media production.
13(a)	So I failed my TOEFL for last time. (E.T. 11)	13(b)	So I failed my TOEFL last time.
14(a)	I want to be proficient because... (E.T. 7)	14(b)	I want to be proficient in English because...
15(a)	Has to act more or less like a ambassador of Malaysia. (E.T. 7,13)	15(b)	I have to act more or less like an ambassador of Malaysia
16(a)	I think I study much in library. (E.T. 13; lexical error 'much')	16(b)	I think I study a lot in the library.
17(a)	We make one room as sleeping room. (Lexical errors 'make', 'sleeping')	17(b)	We use one of the rooms as a bedroom.
18(a)	The Channel Three is only purpose for commercial. Lexical error 'purpose')	18(b)	Channel Three is only meant for commercial.

(For error types, see Chapter Five, Table 5.1, page 184)

Malaysian listeners

As expected, nearly all the sentences, regardless of whether they were erroneous or not were intelligible to all the Malaysian listeners. There were only two erroneous sentences which caused some intelligibility problems. They are:

- (i) In Sentence 9(a), 'Can said it very known' was unintelligible to Listener 22.
- (ii) In Sentence 14(a), the word 'proficient' (mispronounced as [prɒfɪsən]), was unintelligible to Listener 21.

British Listeners

For the British listeners, most of the corrected sentences were intelligible to them, except the following:

- (i) In Sentence 6(b), 'D.R.' was not intelligible to Listener 18.
- (ii) In Sentence 15(b), the word 'ambassador' was heard 'adviser' by Listener 19.

On the other hand, of the eighteen erroneous sentences, eleven caused some intelligibility problems to some of the British listeners. In some cases, the main cause of intelligibility problems might not be syntactic as problems occurred at word level:

- (i) (a) In Sentence 1(a), 'a bit only la' was not intelligible.
Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors ie error types 1 and 7. (Omission of main verb; omission of subject)
- (b) In Int. Two, the same utterance was partly intelligible to one listener and totally unintelligible to six listeners.
Possible cause of intelligibility problem: syntactic errors.
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (ii) (a) In Sentence 3(a), the word 'sports' was unintelligible and 'some badminton' was heard 'sunbathe'. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: stress error on the word 'badminton' [bædmɪntən].
- (b) In Int. Two, the same word 'badminton' in the same utterance was misheard by one listener and 'unheard' by six listeners.
Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: stress error. (same as ii(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.

- (iii) (a) In Sentence 4(a), 'home ah, at home ah' was not intelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors ie error types 17 and 18. (Wrong word order; incoherent elements)
- (b) In Int. Four, the same utterance was partly intelligible to one listener and totally unintelligible to six listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors. (same as iii(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (iv) (a) In Sentence 6(a), 'D.R.' was not intelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: lack of background knowledge.
- (b) In Int. One, the same utterance was partly intelligible to two listeners and totally unintelligible to five listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: lack of background knowledge.
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (v) (a) In Sentence 9(a), the whole utterance was unintelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors ie error types 4 and 17. (Misformation of verbs in passive; wrong word order)
- (b) In Int. Four, the same utterance was totally unintelligible to all the seven listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors. (same as v(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (vi) (a) In Sentence 10(a), 'Just only [b¹nli] was heard 'this morning'. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: segmental error, ie /b/ for /ðv/, and syntactic error type 17 (wrong word order).
- (b) In Int. Six, the same words 'just only' was unintelligible to three listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors. (same as vi(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (vii) (a) In Sentence 11(a), 'and as well if compared' was heard 'and company' and 'often' was unintelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors, ie error types 12 and 15. (Misuse of conjunction; phrases that need restructuring)

- (b) In Int. Ten, the same utterance was partly intelligible to five listeners and totally unintelligible to one listener. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: syntactic errors. (same as vii(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (viii) (a) In Sentence 13(a), the word 'TOEFL' was not intelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: lack of shared knowledge.
- (b) In Int. Five, the same word in the same utterance was misheard by one listener and 'unheard' by six listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: lack of shared knowledge.
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (ix) (a) In Sentence 14(a), the word 'proficient' [prɒfɪʃənt] was not intelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: segmental errors, ie /p/ for /b/ and /s/ for /ʃ/
- (b) In Int. Seven, the same word in the same utterance was intelligible to two listeners, misheard by one listener and totally unintelligible to four listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: segmental errors. (same as ix(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (x) (a) In Sentence 15(a), 'Has to act' and 'ambassador' [embəsədɔ] were unintelligible. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: segmental errors, ie /e/ for /æ/; /ɛ/ for /æ/ and elision of a syllable.
- (b) In Int. Seven, the same word in the same utterance was misheard by one listener and the whole utterance was partly intelligible to two listeners and totally unintelligible to three listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: segmental errors. (same as x(a))
- (c) Results: a parallel.
- (xi) (a) In Sentence 18(a), 'The Channel Three' [tri] was heard 'the chancery'. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: lack of shared knowledge. (To a lesser extent, it could also be due to a rhythmic error where the stress lay in 'Channel Three' rather than 'Channel Three'.)

- (b) In Int. Six, the same utterance was partly intelligible to all the seven listeners. Possible cause of the intelligibility problem: lexical error 'purpose'.

(c) Results: a contrast.

Sentence 7(a) was modified without the listener's realization and was, thus, intelligible: 'At time, there was a zoo inside but they are closed down because of lack of fund.'

It can be noted from the above that there is a great parallelism between the possible causes of intelligibility problems due to syntactic errors in erroneous utterances read in isolation and their counterparts in discourse. eg Sentences 1(a), 4(a), 9(a) and 11(a). Sentences with single syntactic errors, eg 3(a) and 5(a) were intelligible whereas sentences with multiple syntactic errors, eg 1(a), 4(a) and 9(a) caused intelligibility problems. As for Sentences 3(a), 13(a) and 14(a) where there was only one syntactic error, the intelligibility problems did not lie in the syntactic errors. Moreover, it can also be noted that sentences with error type 17 ie wrong word order, eg 4(a) and 9(a) in particular, caused serious intelligibility problems. On the other hand, sentences with error types 1 to 14, eg 3(a), 5(a), 6(a), 12(a), 13(a), 14(a), 15(a) and 16(a), either did not cause any intelligibility problems or the intelligibility problems were not due to syntactic errors.

As for the three lexically erroneous sentences, ie 16(a), 17(a) and 18(a), only 18(a) caused some intelligibility problem but it was not the lexical error which caused the problem. The filler 'la' eg in 5(a) and 7(a), did not seem to affect intelligibility. In 1(a) and 9(a), the intelligibility problems did not occur at word level.

These findings reinforced most of the findings in D.C. One (See Chapter Five, S.5.3), ie:

- (i) Utterances with multiple syntactic errors were ^{more} difficult to interpret than those with single syntactic errors.
- (ii) Utterances with error types 15 to 18 had low degrees of intelligibility.
- (iii) Utterances with one or two errors of types 1 to 14 normally were not affected as to intelligibility.
- (iv) The filler 'la' did not seem to affect intelligibility.

Besides, it is also quite evident that grammatically correct utterances or sentences, though with segmental or suprasegmental errors, were generally intelligible to British listeners. Hence, it can be argued that correct syntax plays an important role in the intelligibility of discourse.

7.3 Data Collection Three: Summary

7.3.1 Aims of D.C. Three

The main aims of this piece of data collection are:

- (i) to find out to what extent the schemata embodying background knowledge about the content of a discourse influence the intelligibility and memory of the discourse;
- (ii) to find out the main causes of information mistakenly recalled.

7.3.2 Subjects, Material and Method

Subjects

Ten native speakers of English and sixteen Malaysians, all students, participated in the D.C. The native-speaker subjects were doing an MA course in the Department of English for Speakers of Other Languages, Institute of Education, University of London. The Malaysian subjects were doing an undergraduate course in English Language Studies in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in Malaysia. The D.C. was carried out when they visited the Institute of Education on 16 May 1986. A separate session was held for the native-speaker subjects on 29 May 1986.

Material

The recorded Oral Interview One was used. (See App. A) This interview was selected because its length was ideal for listening: it comprised about five hundred words and lasted about six minutes. Other interviews were either too long to concentrate on and recall or too short to write a summary on. As far as the content of the interview is concerned, it implied a number of social and cultural schemata that the native-speaker subjects were unlikely to be familiar with.

Method

It was deemed necessary that some minimal exposure to Malaysian English be given to the subjects of both groups. Hence, prior to listening to Interview One, both groups were allowed to listen to Interview Two first. They were then given ten minutes to write a summary of about two hundred words on what they had heard in Interview One. The only

information given to the subjects was that the interview took place some where in Malaysia.

7.3.3 Areas of Investigation

Two main areas related to intelligibility problems were investigated:

- (i) According to schema theory, (See Chapter Six, S.6.4.1) people will learn and remember more of the information in a discourse with schemata they are familiar with because an appropriate schema may provide the 'ideational scaffolding' to support the learning of detailed information that fits into that schema. (Anderson and Spiro, 1978) The amount of content of the interview, measured in terms of (a) proper names and (b) important information, that the Malaysian subjects could recall was correlated with that of the native-speaker subjects, to see whether the findings supported the schema theory.
- (ii) The modification of content of the interview can either be in the form of elaboration or distortion: the former refers to appropriate extension of information in the interview, and the latter, inappropriate modification of information. Schema theory predicts elaboration where a discourse is incomplete and distortion where the reader or listener diverges from the schema presupposed by the discourse. Both the Malaysian and native-speaker subjects' elaboration and distortion of information in the interview were compared, and the main causes of such modification were looked into.

It must be pointed out that the findings were analyzed in terms of 'content' schemata rather than 'textual' schemata as was stated in Chapter Six, both Malaysian and native-speaker subjects were familiar with the 'textual' schemata, ie the structure of the oral interviews.

7.3.4. Results and Discussion

The results of this piece of data collection can be summarized as follows:

(NB The subjects' style of writing and how facts were presented were not discussed because these were considered beyond the scope of this study.).

Table 7.3 Proper names in Oral Interview One

Proper name	Ipoh			
Tot. No. of subjects: Malaysian:16 Native-speakers:10	Tot. No. recalled correctly	Tot. No. recalled incorrectly	Tot.No. not mentioned	Tot. No. could not recall
M	16(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
NS	3(30.0%)	5(50.0%)	0(0%)	2(20.0%)
Proper name	D.R. Park			
M	8(50.0%)	4(25.0%)	3(18.8%)	1(6.2%)
NS	0(0%)	8(80.0%)	0(0%)	2(20.0%)
Proper name	Perak			
M	2(12.5%)	0(0%)	14(87.5%)	0(0%)
NS	0(0%)	0(0%)	10(100%)	0(0%)
Proper name	San Poh Tong			
M	5(31.2%)	0(0%)	11(68.8%)	0(0%)
NS	0(0%)	0(0%)	10(100%)	0(0%)
Proper name	Kinta			
M	0(0%)	0(0%)	16(100%)	0(0%)
NS	0(0%)	0(0%)	10(100%)	0(0%)
Proper name	Doctor Seenivasagam			
M	5(31.2%)	0(0%)	11(68.8%)	0(0%)
NS	0(0%)	0(0%)	10(100%)	0(0%)
Proper name	Penang			
M	16(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
NS	8(80.0%)	1(10.0%)	0(0%)	1(10.0%)
Proper name	K.L.			
M	16(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
NS	6(60.0%)	2(20.0%)	0(0%)	2(20.0%)
Proper name	USM			
M	14(87.5%)	0(0%)	2(12.5%)	0(0%)
NS	6(60.0%)	3(30.0%)	0(0%)	1(10.0%)

As expected, Table 7.3 reveals that since all the Malaysian subjects had background knowledge of the towns and cities in Malaysia, ie Ipoh, Penang and K.L., they recalled them correctly:

Four subjects spelled out K.L. ie Kuala Lumpur in full. One subject used the Bahasa Malaysia term 'Pulau Pinang' for 'Penang'. Surprisingly, two subjects did not mention USM in their summaries. The rest recalled them correctly and three of them spelled out the name of the University in full, ie 'Universiti Sains Malaysia' or 'The Science University of Malaysia'. It is believed that the few subjects who recalled 'San Poh Tong', 'Perak Cave' and 'D.R. Park' correctly were either residents of

Ipoh or had visited these places. It is, however, interesting to note that 8(or 50%) of the subjects recalled 'D.R. Park' correctly and of the eight subjects, five of them spelled out the detail: it stood for Doctor Seenivasagam. Of the four who did not recall 'D.R. Park' correctly, two recalled it as 'Diah Park' and one as 'T.R. Park'. This shows that they heard 'D' and 'R' correctly, but because of lack of background knowledge, they made a subjective guess and interpreted it as 'Diah Park' or 'T.R. Park'. (/t/ is often unaspirated in Malaysian pronunciation) Only one subject recalled it, with doubts that it was (Deer Park(?)). This indicates that the schema of a 'deer park' hardly occurred in the memory of the Malaysian subjects as there has never been any game park in Malaysia.

As for the native-speaker subjects, with the existing schema in Malaysia, most of them could provide an 'ideational scaffolding' to support information that fitted into that schema, where names of cities and towns were concerned: Of the ten subjects, eight recalled 'Penang' correctly, one recalled it as 'Peneng', while only one referred it to 'a place'. This could be due to the fact that 'Penang' is a popular holiday resort known to most Westerners. Only six subjects recalled K.L. correctly, though it was not certain whether all of them knew it referred to the capital, Kuala Lumpur. Only one subject spelled out specifically 'presumably Kuala Lumpur'. Had the full name, Kuala Lumpur, been used, most likely all the subjects would have recalled it correctly. On the other hand, as 'Ipoh' is a less well-known town in Malaysia, it was only correctly recalled by three subjects. Three other subjects recalled it as 'Ipo' or 'Ijo' while two others just referred it to 'a place'. Although six subjects recalled USM correctly, it was again not certain whether all of them knew it was the abbreviated name of a university. One of them, however, could spell out the full name 'University Sains' and another made a subjective guess, recalling it as 'University of Southern Malaysia'. One recalled it mistakenly as USN and two others, USA. The schema of a 'park' provided eight subjects with an 'ideational scaffolding' that fitted into their frame: they recalled it as 'deer park' as it must be quite a familiar concept in the West. Only two others referred to it as 'the park'. Hence, it was quite evident that schemata embodying background knowledge about the content of this discourse exerted a profound influence on how well the discourse was comprehended and remembered in this particular regard at least.

(ii) Important Information

Table 7.4 Important information in Oral Interview One

Item No.	Important information	Tot. No. of Malaysian subjects:				Tot. No. of native-speaker subjects:			
		recalled correctly	recalled incorrectly	not mentioned	could not recall	recalled correctly	recalled incorrectly	not mentioned	could not recall
1	a resident of Ipoh	16(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(30.0%)	5(50.0%)	0(0%)	2(20.0%)
2	few tourist attraction (in Ipoh)	15(93.8%)	0(0%)	1(6.2%)	0(0%)	6(60.0%)	0(0%)	4(40.0%)	0(0%)
3	preferred Penang to K.L.	15(93.8%)	0(0%)	1(6.2%)	0(0%)	5(50.0%)	2(20.0%)	1(10.0%)	2(20.0%)
4	visited relatives while in Penang	8(50.0%)	0(0%)	8(50.0%)	0(0%)	5(50.0%)	0(0%)	5(50.0%)	0(0%)
5	new to Penang	3(18.8%)	0(0%)	13(81.2%)	0(0%)	2(20.0%)	1(10.0%)	6(60.0%)	1(10.0%)
6	a student in USM	14(87.5%)	0(0%)	2(12.5%)	0(0%)	8(80.0%)	2(20.0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
7	disliked Orientation Week	8(50.0%)	0(0%)	8(50.0%)	0(0%)	3(30.0%)	0(0%)	6(60.0%)	1(10.0%)
8	major subject: Chemistry	12(75.0%)	0(0%)	4(25.0%)	0(0%)	10(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
9	ambition: a career in management	5(31.3%)	0(0%)	11(68.7%)	0(0%)	3(30.0%)	5(50.0%)	2(20.0%)	0(0%)

Table 7.4 shows that none of the important information listed was incorrectly recalled or could not be recalled by any of the Malaysian subjects. However, some of the items were either incorrectly recalled or could not be recalled by some of the native-speaker subjects. A closer look at these items ie 1,3,5,6,7 and 9, reveals that they needed some kind of background knowledge to enable them to recall them. eg It was due to lack of background knowledge of 'Ipoh', 'K.L.', 'USM' and 'Orientation Week' in items 1,3,6 and 7 that caused intelligibility problems, which in turn, affected their memory. Item 9, on the other hand, was recalled incorrectly by five subjects because they misheard the key word 'management'. (See (iii) below)

The Table also indicates that the native-speaker subjects could recall as much important information, especially that which did not involve much background information, as their Malaysian counterparts. eg Items 4,6,8, and 9. This is a clear indication that the overall intelligibility of the interview to native speakers was relatively high.

(iii) Details, Elaboration and Distortion of Information in the Interview

Some of the most prominent elaboration and distortion of information were observed: As expected, many Malaysian subjects gave considerable details and spelled out what was only inferrable in the interview. eg

- (a) Five subjects recalled that 'D.R. Park' stood for 'Doctor Seenivasagam Park' and one subject recalled that 'D.R. Park' was also known as 'Taman Seenivasagam', ('Taman', a Bahasa Malaysia word, meaning 'garden' or 'park') though this was not mentioned in the interview. All subjects recalled that there was a swimming pool and a children's playground in the Park. On the other hand, due to lack of background knowledge, none of the native-speaker subjects could recall 'Doctor Seenivasagam'. Nine of them, however, could recall that a swimming pool and a

children's playground were in the Park.

- (b) Many Malaysian subjects could list all or most of the tourist attraction in Ipoh. eg
- (1) 'Perak Cave, San Poh Tong Cave, D.R. Park where there are garden, children playground and a swimming pool.'
 - (2) 'places like San Poh Tong, Diah Park which had children's playground and swimming pool.'
 - (3) 'D.R. Park (which is also known as Dr. Seenivasagam Park); the Perak Cave, San Poh Tong, and facilities are available there such as children playground and a swimming pool.'
 - (4) 'The girl told him that he could visit the D.R.Park, Tiger Lane etc.' ('Tiger Lane', which was not mentioned in the interview, is a wellknown residential area for the rich in Ipoh.)

On the other hand, none of the native-speaker subjects could spell out all these details.

- (c) Six Malaysian subjects recalled correctly that the interviewee did not like the 'Orientation Week' and gave reasons for not liking it. ie because of the 'seniors'' mischievous behaviour. eg
- (1) 'She was made to do silly things by seniors during the Orientation Week.'
 - (2) 'Seniors were fussy during Orientation Week.'
 - (3) 'She didn't like Orientation Week because of the senior's mistreatment.'
 - (4) 'She likes USM except for the Orientation Week for the seniors were bossy and irritating.'

On the other hand, although three native-speaker subjects could recall 'Orientation Week' and some details were given, because of lack of shared social and cultural knowledge (See Chapter Six, S. 6.6.6) they either could not recall that it was the 'seniors' who were disturbing new students during the 'Orientation Week' or distorted what the interviewee had said.
eg

- (1) 'The interviewer moved on to university life and

orientation week. This seemed to involve elements of carnival and high jinks which she did not like.' The subject had in fact elaborated upon the state of affairs. However, he failed to mention who were involved in these 'high jinks'.

- (2) 'She expresses a dislike of the orientation week, where officials appear to have been unpleasant and unsympathetic.' Here, the subject mistakenly recalled that it was the 'officials' who were unpleasant.
 - (3) 'She obviously did not think much of the orientation week, too many fussy questions being asked or something like that.' The subject did not mention who asked those 'fussy questions'.
 - (4) One subject who could not recall the 'orientation week' or the 'seniors' made this statement: 'At the USM, the ? are fussy, always asking things and keep bothering her (and her friends)?'
 - (5) One subject who did not mention the 'orientation week' wrote, 'He then asks her how she is getting on at her college (USN)?, She thinks the seniors are fussy.'
 - (6) Another subject who failed to recall the 'orientation week' could recall 'seniors' : 'She didn't seem to enjoy the Orientation ? . The seniors were too fussy, gave too many orders and asked too many questions.'
(See also (d) below)
- (d) Both the Malaysian and native-speaker subjects could elaborate on information which required common sense rather than background knowledge, though the Malaysian subjects' elaboration was usually in greater detail. eg Based on their common knowledge, the Malaysian subjects explained why the interviewee preferred Penang to K.L.:
- (1) 'She prefers Penang to K.L. because of the density of the population in K.L.'
 - (2) 'The interviewee stated her preference for Penang because there were more crowds in K.L. and life was too hectic there.'

- (3) 'She said that she preferred Penang more than K.L. Her reason was that the air in K.L. was dirty and polluted.'
- (4) 'She disliked K.L. because of the hectic life and hustle and bustle of the city.'
- (5) 'The girl liked Penang more than K.L. because air pollution is not so high in Penang and Penang is not so congested.'

Similarly, the native-speaker subjects could elaborate a little on the interviewee's preference. eg

- (1) 'She prefers Penang to K.L. because there are few people and I think she said it was less tiring.'
- (2) 'She prefers Penang to K.L. because it's smaller, there's less pressure and fewer people.'
- (3) 'She likes Penang better than K.L. : there are not so many people and she does not feel so tired.'
- (4) 'She likes Penang better than K.L. because it is quieter.'
- (5) The subject who could not recall K.L. made this statement: 'She thought Penang was better than another place because there were not so many people and because of the beaches.'

Again, when no background knowledge was required, the native-speaker subjects could give details of the interviewee's ambition after completing her course in USM. eg

- (1) 'Student is doing Chemistry but asked if she wanted a job in Chemistry, she replied that she didn't know yet, but would like to be in management.'
- (2) 'She was majoring in Chemistry and minoring in Management which is where she thought she would work when she'd finished her course.'
- (3) 'Her major was in Chemistry and asked if she would later make a career in this field, thought that she might prefer a career in management.'

Distortion of Information

The distortion of information given by the native-speaker subjects

was mainly due to the lack of background knowledge and, to a lesser extent, due to mishearing of key words in discourse. eg

- (i) The native-speaker subjects who failed to recall USM or did not know that it was a university distorted information related to it:

- (1) 'Asked if the school she was at was a good one, she said yes.'
- (2) 'The interviewer then discussed her experience in the USA and she referred to fussy seniors and a certain amount of ordering that had gone on.'
('bothering', mispronounced as [bʊdərɪŋ] was heard 'ordering')
- (3) 'A compatriot is questioning her about her reaction to America and about her future intentions.'

- (ii) The native-speaker subjects who misheard key words in the discourse distorted information related to the word in question. eg

- (1) 'The seniors were too fussy, gave too many orders.'
Here, 'bothering' was heard 'ordering' (See (i) 2 above)
- (2) 'She is majoring in Chemistry, I think her other subject is medicine.'

The word 'management' (mispronounced as [mænɛtʃmən]) was heard 'medicine'.

- (3) 'She majors in Chemistry but would like to go into the field of medicine.'

Here again 'management' was misheard 'medicine'.

- (iii) Sometimes, distortion of information was, in fact, 'logical' inference from other information heard correctly.

eg

- (1) 'Since she'd studied Chemistry, she wanted to be a Chemist.'
- (2) 'She made a rather surprising inference that she would become a chemist because she was studying Chemistry.'
- (3) 'She is studying Chemistry and hopes to work in that field.'

It was noted that four Malaysian subjects also made this distortion of information:

- (1) 'It's (T.R. Park) closed down due to lack of fund.'
- (2) 'However, due to lack of fund, the swimming pool has already been closed down.'
- (3) 'The swimming pool shows lack of concern from government to improve it probably because of lack of fund.'
- (4) 'The swimming pool in it (D.R. Park) was closed due to lack of fund.'

It was, in fact, the 'zoo' inside the Park which had been closed down. The distortion of information was, I believe, mainly due to the fact that they all missed out the part of the discourse which was vital to the correct information. ie, 'At time there was a zoo inside la, but they are close some because of lack of fund.'

The conclusion to be drawn from this piece of data collection is straightforward: The schemata embodying background knowledge about the content of the interview exerted a profound influence on how well the interview was comprehended and remembered. Moreover, instances of elaboration, inferences and distortion of information recalled provided some significant evidence of the role of background information in discourse comprehension and memory. It is also evident that distortion of information could be due to mishearing of key words in the discourse. In other words, apart from background knowledge, a minimal segmental correctness also played an important role in intelligibility. The findings, thus,, reinforced those discussed in Chapter Six.

7.4 Analysis of Intelligibility Problems with Utterances Rated -h and --h in the Main Corpus

7.4.1 Some Important Findings in D.C. One, Two and Three

At the segmental level, it was found that

- (i) segmental errors did not normally cause intelligibility problems if contextual clues were explicit and the words preceding and following the words in question were correctly heard. (D.C. One: Chapter Four, S. 4.4, Chapter Six, S. 6.6.4)
- (ii) correct pronunciation of words was more important when words were read in isolation than when they were used

in context. (D.C. Two (a): S. 7.1.3)

At the suprasegmental level, it was discovered that

- (i) incorrect word stress did not normally cause intelligibility problems if contextual clues were explicit, especially when there were no segmental errors. (D.C. One:Chapter Four, S. 4.5.3)
- (ii) different rhythmic patterns did not normally cause intelligibility problems. (D.C. One:Chapter Four, S.4.5.6.3)
- (iii) absence of tonic syllables in utterances did not affect intelligibility. (D.C. One: Chapter Four, S. 4.5.7)
- (iv) tone grouping errors sometimes caused intelligibility problems. (D.C. One: Chapter Four, S. 4.5.7)
- (v) different intonation patterns did not seem to affect intelligibility. (D.C. One: Chapter Four, S. 4.5.9.4)

At the syntactic level, the following was noted:

- (i) Utterances with error types 1-14 (See Table 5.1 on p.184) did not normally affect intelligibility while those with error types 15-18 did. Moreover, utterances with multiple errors were more difficult to interpret than those with single errors. (D.C One: Chapter Five, S. 5.3.2 and 5.3.3)
- (ii) Similar findings were obtained in D.C. Two (b) (See S. 7.2)

At the lexical level, it was found that the degree of intelligibility of lexical errors depended on the degree of deviation of the words in question. (D.C. One: Chapter Five, S. 5.3.7)

At the discourse level, it was found that

- (i) some intelligibility problems related to mispronounced lexical items were not due to segmental errors but to nonlinguistic variables. eg lack of shared knowledge. (D.C. One: Chapter Six, S. 6.6)
- (ii) schematic or background knowledge had a profound influence on the intelligibility of discourse.

(D.C. One: Chapter Six, S. 6.6.1 to 6.6.3; D.C. Three: S. 7.3)

- (iii) apart from lack of shared knowledge which affected intelligibility, lack of cohesion or coherence, too, caused intelligibility problems. (D.C. One: Chapter Six, S. 6.6.5 to 6.6.8)

Hence, it is clear that as perception is a very complicated process, intelligibility involves an enormous number of relevant variables.

7.4.2 Determining the Main Causes of Intelligibility Problems

Before utterances rated -h and --h in the main corpus can be examined as a whole, it is perhaps necessary to examine some of the utterances rated ++h and +h to determine what factors did not generally affect intelligibility.

As was discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.3, utterances rated ++h on the intelligibility rating scale (Table 3.3) included utterances which were correctly produced by the subjects and correctly heard by the listeners. This included utterances which were free from lexical and syntactic errors. The criteria, however, did not rule out the possibility of phonological errors. For instance, the following utterances were rated ++h for all the seven British listeners: (mispronounced words were transcribed, wrong word stress was marked, tonic syllables, in capital letters)

- (i) Int. One, Utt. 13 (Chinese)

S: yes. Er... I think I like Penang ¹ better than K.L...

Although the utterance was free from syntactic and lexical errors, it was produced with phonological errors:

At the segmental level, the words 'think' and 'than' were mispronounced as [tɪŋ] and [dʒn] respectively.

At the suprasegmental level, there was (a) a stress error on the word 'better'; (b) the utterance was spoken with a kind of syllable-timed rhythm. (See chapter Four, S. 4.5.6.1)

- (ii) Int. Six, Utt. 10 (Indian)

S: Er... Kampar is a small town which is located ¹ thirty-four miles from K.L..

At the segmental level, the words 'town', 'located', 'thirty' and 'miles' were mispronounced as [t̄aun], [lokət̄əd], [t̄ət̄i] and [maɪs] respectively.

At the suprasegmental level, (a) there was a stress error on the word 'located'; (b) there was no tonic syllable in the utterance; (c) the utterance was produced with a non-stress-timed rhythm. (See Chapter Four, S. 4.5.6.2)

(iii) Int. Ten, Utt. 43 (Malay)

S: And then how you could bring up a child to be a proper human being.

At the segmental level, the words 'then', 'child' and 'proper' were mispronounced as [den], [t̄ɹaid] and [p̄rɒpə] respectively.

At the suprasegmental level;

- (a) there was no tonic syllable in the utterance;
- (b) the utterance was produced with a syllable-timed rhythm. (See Chapter Four, S. 4.5.6.1)

These examples indicate that segmental errors and stress errors did not seem to affect intelligibility if the mispronounced words or words with stress errors occurred in utterances with explicit contextual clues and the words which preceded and followed the words in question were correctly heard. Moreover, lack of tonic syllable did not seem to affect intelligibility and both syllable-timed and non-stress-timed rhythm did not seem to interfere with intelligibility either.

Let us now examine some utterances rated +h on the intelligibility rating scale, ie utterances which were wrongly produced by the subjects but correctly heard by the listeners. The errors could be syntactic or lexical and the listeners either interpreted them through self-correction without realizing it or reproduced them correctly with the message understood. (See Chapter Three, S. 3.3) The following examples were rated +h for all the seven British listeners:

(i) Int. One, Utt. 18 (Chinese)

S: Yes. When I visit̄ing my relat̄IVES.

At the segmental level, the words 'relatives' was mispronounced as [relet̄ifs].

At the suprasegmental level,

- (a) there were stress errors on the words 'visiting' and 'relatives';
- (b) the rhythm used was syllable-timed;
- (c) the tonic was on the right word 'relatives', but it was wrongly stressed.

At the syntactic level, there was omission of the auxiliary verb, 'was' (E.T.1: See table 5.1)

(ii) Int. One, Utt. 24 (Chinese)

S: I ma'jor... I majoring ChemisTRY.

At the segmental level, the words 'major' and 'majoring' were mispronounced as [medʒə] and [medʒə'riŋ] respectively.

At the segmental level,

- (a) there were stress errors on the words 'major', 'majoring' and 'Chemistry';
- (b) the tonic was on the right word 'Chemistry', but it was wrongly stressed.
- (c) the rhythm used was syllable-timed.

At the syntactic level, there were omission of auxiliary verb, 'am' and omission of preposition 'in' (E.T.1 and 11)

(ii) Int. Six, Utt. 26 (Indian)

S: So we cannot comment anythi¹ng about that.

At the segmental level, the words 'cannot', 'comment', 'anything' and 'that' were mispronounced as [kənət], [kɒmen], [eni'fiŋ] and [dæt] respectively.

At the suprasegmental levelm

- (a) there was a stress error on the word 'anything';
- (b) there was no tonic syllable in the utterance;
- (c) the rhythm used was non-stress-timed.

At the syntactic level, there was misuse of preposition 'about' (E.T. 11)

(iv) Int. Seven, Utt. 18 (Malay)

S: Under the sponsored by my department, the programme of Institute of Management.

At the segmental level, the word 'management' was mispronounced as [mɛnetʃmən].

At the suprasegmental level,

- (a) there was a stress error on the word 'institute';
- (b) there was no tonic syllable in the utterance;
- (c) the rhythm used was near stress-timed.

At the syntactic level, there was replacement of noun with verb ie 'sponsored' for 'sponsorship', and misuse of preposition 'by'. (E.T. 14 and 11)

Hence, it was evident that segmental errors and word stress errors generally did not affect intelligibility if contextual clues were explicit and the words preceding and following the mispronounced words in question were correctly heard. It was also clear that absence of tonic syllable and the use of syllable-timed or non-stress-time rhythm did not hamper intelligibility. In addition, utterances with one or two syntactic error types 1-14 did not seem to affect intelligibility either.

Bearing in mind the factors which did not normally affect intelligibility, the possible causes of intelligibility problems with utterances rated -h and --h could be identified by eliminating what did not seem to interfere with intelligibility. Hence, it may be possible to rule out the following:

- (a) different rhythmic patterns;
- (b) lack of tonic syllables;
- (c) different intonation patterns; (See Chapter Four, S. 4.5.9.4)
- (d) the use of 'fillers'. (See Chapter Five, S. 5.3.8)

To illustrate the above, the following utterances which were rated -h or --h for some of or all the seven British listeners can be taken as examples:

- (i) Int. One, Utt. 15 (Chinese)

S: When I in K.L., I feel [fil] the [də] air [e]

around K.L. is so [so] tense [tens] 1a.

The intelligibility problem did not arise in the first part of the utterance, 'When I in K.L.' where there was a syntactic error, ie omission of main verb 'was' (E.T.1), but occurred at word level in the second part of the utterance. ie

- (a) the word 'air' was unintelligible to six listeners and Listener 4 was not certain whether she heard it correctly or not;
- (b) the word 'tense' was intelligible to three listeners, misheard as 'dense' by two listeners and unintelligible to two listeners.

There were no syntactic or lexical errors in this part of the utterance and there were neither stress errors nor tone-grouping error in the utterance. Moreover, no schematic or background knowledge was required to interpret the utterance. (Note that proper names of towns and cities in Malaysia which appeared in the interviews were revealed to the listeners before they listened to the recordings. See Chapter Three, S. 3.2.2) Hence, the main cause of the intelligibility problem was most probably the segmental errors, ie mispronunciation of the monosyllabic words 'air' and 'tense'. (E.T. a and h, See Table 4.1, P.112)

(ii) Int. Two. Utt. 13 (Chinese)

S: Sport [spɔt] sport [spɔt] I watch it... football [fʊtbɔl] and er... some badminton [bædmɪntən].

The intelligibility problem occurred at word level: the word 'badminton' was unintelligible to five listeners, intelligible to one listener and 'some badminton' was heard 'something with them' by another.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) No background knowledge was required to interpret the utterance;

- (b) There was no tone-grouping error.

Hence, the intelligibility problem could be due to segmental error or stress error. Replacement of /æ/ with /ɛ/ in most of the words (except monosyllabic words) used by the subjects did not seem to affect intelligibility. (See Chapter Four, S. 4.3.9) The intelligibility problem was therefore most probably attributed to stress error. The intelligibility problem in this utterance occurred at the suprasegmental level.

(iii) Int. Eight, Utt. 9 (Indian)

S: Its difference is in TV3 [t̄vi t̄ri] programmes [p̄rɒgræms] they [de] are putting [p̄ʌtiŋ] interesting programmes [p̄rɒgræms].

The intelligibility problem occurred at both clause and sentence levels. ie 'Its difference is' and 'they are putting interesting' were unintelligible to two listeners and the whole utterance was unintelligible to one listener.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) There were no syntactic or lexical errors;
- (b) Segmental errors could be overlooked as the intelligibility problem did not arise at word level;
- (c) The term 'TV3' (mentioned several times before this utterance) which required some background knowledge was intelligible to the listeners.

Hence, the intelligibility problem could be due to suprasegmental error: The utterance was spoken with only one tone group ie there was no perceivable pause between 'TV3 programmes' and 'they are putting'. The intelligibility problem was therefore most probably attributed to tone-grouping error, which occurred at the suprasegmental level.

(iv) Int. Ten, Utt. 35 (Malay)

S: So [so] very difficult [difikət] for them [dem] to survive.

The intelligibility problem occurred at both phrase and sentence levels: 'to survive' was misheard 'to go back' by one listener, unintelligible to three listeners and the whole utterance was unintelligible to another listener.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of the intelligibility problems were:

- (a) There were no segmental or stress errors in the word 'survive';
- (b) The syntactic error ie omission of dummy subject 'it' + is (E.T. 6) in the first part of the utterance did not seem to affect intelligibility;
- (c) There was no lexical error;
- (d) No background knowledge was required to interpret the utterance.

To determine the main cause of the intelligibility problem with this utterance, one had to take the voice quality of the subject into consideration: it was noticed that her voice trailed off towards the end of the utterance, so much so that it was hardly audible. The intelligibility problems of some other utterances of the same subject could be attributed to the same reason. (See App. F) This kind of intelligibility problem was regarded as 'error' at the suprasegmental level in this study. ('Voice quality' is, in fact, often considered a paralinguistic feature. See Chapter Two, S. 2.4.4)

(v) Int. Six, Utt. 25 (Indian)

S: We cannot [kæ nɒt] comment [kɒmen] the [də] Channel [tʃenəl] Three [tri], because Channel [tʃenəl] Three [tri] is [is] ... is [is] only [ɒnli] purpose [pəpəs] for commercial [kɒməʃiəl].

The intelligibility problem occurred at word and clause levels: the word 'purpose' was unintelligible to one listener

and the clause 'is only purpose for commercial' was unintelligible to six listeners.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) Segmental errors could be overlooked as for the majority of the listeners, the intelligibility problem did not occur at word level;
- (b) The syntactic error ie omission of preposition 'on' (E.T. 11) after 'comment' did not affect intelligibility;
- (c) There was no tone-grouping error;
- (d) The term 'Channel Three' which needed some background knowledge to interpret was intelligible to all listeners.

Hence, the intelligibility problem could be narrowed down to the wrong word choice, 'purpose'. The intelligibility problem occurred at the lexical level.

(vi) Int. Two, Utt. 2 (Chinese)

S: And for the [də] games [gems] er... a bit only
[oni] la.

The intelligibility problem occurred at word and sentence levels: the word 'game' was heard 'ink' by one listener and the whole utterance was unintelligible to six listeners.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) Segmental errors could be overlooked as for the majority of the listeners, the intelligibility problem did not occur at word level;
- (b) There was no tone-grouping error;
- (c) No background knowledge was required to interpret the utterance.

Hence, the intelligibility problem was most likely due to syntactic errors: the utterance had multiple syntactic errors, viz.:

- (1 Omission of main verb 'play' (E.T. 1)

- (2) Omission of subject 'I' (E.T. 7)
- (3) Misuse of conjunction 'and' (E.T. 12)
- (4) Addition of article 'the' (E.T. 13)

The intelligibility problem therefore occurred at the syntactic level.

(vii) Int. Three, Utt. 6 (Chinese)

S: Jobs? Er... Mostly [moslī] they [de] are rubber tapper [tɛ'pə]

The intelligibility problem occurred at word level: the term 'rubber tapper' was unintelligible to two listeners, misheard as 'vegetables' by two listeners, and as 'agriculture', 'jungles' and 'rubble double' by three other listeners.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) There were neither lexical nor syntactic errors;
- (b) There was no tone-grouping error;
- (c) As was stated before, the replacement of /æ/ with /ɛ/ did not normally affect intelligibility except for monosyllabic words.

Thus, although the intelligibility problem occurred at word level, segmental error was not the main cause of the problem. Judging from the listeners' interpretation of the utterance, (For details, see Chapter Six, S. 6.6.1) it was found that the main cause of the intelligibility problem was attributed to some nonlinguistic variable, ie lack of shared social and cultural background knowledge. The intelligibility problem, therefore, occurred at the discourse level.

(viii) Int. Four, Utt. 6 (Chinese)

S: Er... In Muar, they [de], they [de] have [hɛf] also [pso] a er... what... a 'tanjung'

The intelligibility problem occurred at word level: the word 'tanjung' was unintelligible to five listeners and heard as 'banjo' by two listeners. The intelligibility

problem here was obvious: it was because of the lack of shared understanding of alternate code, the Bahasa Malaysia word, that gave rise to the intelligibility problem.

(ix) Int: Seven, Utt. 2 (Malay)

S: Yes. Sponsored by the [də] Department.

The intelligibility problem occurred at word level: the word 'department' was heard 'government' by two listeners and unintelligible to one listener.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) There were no syntactic or lexical errors;
- (b) There was no stress error on the word 'department' in which the intelligibility problem occurred.
- (c) There was no tone grouping error.
- (d) The intelligibility problem did not occur at the mispronounced word 'the'.

The intelligibility problem, in fact, occurred beyond sentence level: the listeners' interpretations were influenced by the interviewer's question, 'Are you sponsored by the Government?'. The answer 'Yes' implied that the rest of the answer must be followed by 'sponsored by the Government' and not 'the Department', though we learned from the succeeding utterance that 'the Department' referred to 'the MARA' which was an organization of the Government. Hence, the 'apparent' incoherent element 'yes' had caused the intelligibility problem, which occurred at the discourse level.

(x) Int. Three, Utt. 14 (Chinese)

S: Not very [veli] well. Also [bso] very [veli]
poor [p̄və] la and can [k̄én] cannot [k̄énɔt]
communicate [k̄ɔmjuniket] with person [p̄əsən] la.

The intelligibility problem occurred at phrase, clause and sentence levels: 'not very well' was heard 'not only that' by two listeners, 'not very well, also very poor la' was unintelligible to four listeners and the whole utterance

was unintelligible to one listener.

Factors which could be excluded as main causes of intelligibility problems were:

- (a) Segmental errors could be overlooked since the intelligibility problem did not occur at word level;
- (b) There was no tone grouping error;
- (c) No background knowledge was required to interpret the utterance.
- (d) The intelligibility problem did not arise at the lexical level 'person', for example.

Hence, most probably the intelligibility problem occurred because of multiple syntactic errors:

- (1) Omission of subject 'I'. (E.T. 7)
- (2) Omission of main verb 'am'. (E.T. 1)
- (3) Misuse of conjunction 'not...also'. (E.T. 12)
- (4) Omission of object 'English'. (E.T. 7)

However, since the incorrect cohesive link 'not...also' was directly related to the preceding utterances (ie Utt. 11, 12 and 13), the intelligibility problem occurred at the discourse level too. Thus, in this case, it was at both the syntactic and discourse levels that the intelligibility problem occurred.

7.4.3 Classification of Intelligibility Problem Areas

Based on the examples illustrated above, ten different main causes of intelligibility problems could be identified. Since some of the causes were closely related to each other, this broad classification of problem areas can thus be consolidated into five main categories, viz.:

1. Segmental errors: including mispronunciation of vowels, diphthongs, consonants, consonant clusters, elision of phonemes or syllables. (E.T. a-h, see Table 4.1, p112)

2. Suprasegmental errors: including incorrect word stress, incorrect tone grouping and voice quality.
3. Syntactic errors: including incorrect syntax.
(E.T. 1-18, see Table 5.1, p184)
4. Lexical errors: including incorrect lexis.
5. Discourse factors: including
 - (i) lack of shared background or schematic knowledge which could be
 - (a) no shared knowledge of proper names, classified under 'No shared knowledge (1) eg 'TOEFL'
 - (b) no shared knowledge of social/cultural practices, classified under 'No shared knowledge (2). eg 'off-campus';
 - (c) no shared knowledge of alternative code and proper names in Bahasa Malaysia, classified under 'No shared knowledge (3) eg 'banjo', 'Desa Permai'.
 - (ii) incorrect cohesive links and lack of coherence.

Each utterance rated -h and --h in the main corpus was listed in Appendix F, and the intelligibility problems were identified by using the 'elimination' process shown in the examples above. Full details were set out, subject by subject, in order of occurrence, and the following information was included:

- (i) transcription of mispronounced key words which gave rise to intelligibility problems at word level;
- (ii) mishearing and 'unhearing' of words, phrase or clause in utterances;
- (iii) 'unhearing' of whole utterances (symbolized by (+));
- (iv) number of occurrence;
- (v) degree of intelligibility;
- (vi) possible cause of the intelligibility problem;
- (vii) the level at which the intelligibility problem occurred.

In most cases, one predominant cause of lack of intelligibility

was apparent although there might have been other less important contributory factors. However, in fifteen cases, two causes were equally important contributory factors (as in example (x) above). Intelligibility problems in these cases were, thus, attributed to two main causes.

7.4.4 Results and Discussion

In view of the constraints on the process of interpretation imposed on the listeners (See Chapter Six, S. 6.5) and the numerous variables involved in intelligibility discussed in Chapter Four, Five and Six, only limited claims on the basis of the results could be made. ie the results were not 100% reliable. (The following figures were obtained from Appendix F)

Table 7.5 Statistics of utterances rated -h and --h in the main corpus

Intelligibility problems occurring at	Total number of utterances	Percentage
Discourse level	42	33.9%
Segmental level	35	28.2%
Syntactic level	26	21.0%
Suprasegmental level	15	12.1%
Lexical level	6	4.8%
Grand total	124	100%

Table 7.5 reveals that of the one hundred and twenty-four utterances rated -h and --h (utterances with two main causes of intelligibility problems were counted twice), 33.9% of the intelligibility problems

occurred at the discourse level, 28.2% at the segmental level, 21.0% at the syntactic level, 12.1% at the suprasegmental level and 4.8% at the lexical level. Hence, nonlinguistic variables at the discourse level presented the greatest barrier to intelligibility for the British listeners, and segmental errors were the next most important factor in intelligibility problems. Syntactic errors constituted the third important factor, suprasegmental errors were of lesser importance and lexical errors appeared to be of very minor importance. It has to be pointed out that nonlinguistic variable affecting intelligibility at the discourse level would have been even more significant if the names of the towns and cities had not been revealed to the listeners before they listened to the recordings.

Moreover, Appendix F indicates that intelligibility problems occurring at the syntactic and discourse levels, in particular, lack of shared knowledge, affected intelligibility for nearly all the listeners, whereas intelligibility problems occurring at the segmental level normally only affected intelligibility for some listeners. Mispronunciation of monosyllabic words especially those with consonant errors, however, affected intelligibility for nearly all the listeners. Intelligibility problems occurring at the suprasegmental level normally only affected intelligibility for some of the listeners. Besides, most of the utterances rated --h had intelligibility problems attributed to either the syntactic or discourse level while most of the utterances rated -h had intelligibility problems attributed to either the segmental or suprasegmental level. In other words, intelligibility problems occurring at the syntactic and discourse levels were more serious than those occurring at the segmental and suprasegmental levels.

The results reinforced most of the findings summarized in Section 7.4.1, and in particular, in D.C. Three, i.e. schematic or background knowledge had a profound influence on the intelligibility of discourse especially with mispronunciation of key words.

7.4.4.1 Statistics from Appendix F

The following statistics are derived from Appendix F:

- (i) Of the 38 utterances with intelligibility problems attributed to lack of shared knowledge, 19 (or 50.0%) were related to lack of shared social and cultural knowledge, 12 (or 31.67) were related to lack of shared alternative codes and 7 (or 18.4%) were related to lack of shared knowledge of proper names.
- (ii) Of the 51 words with intelligibility problems attributed to segmental errors, 24 (or 47.1%) were monosyllabic words, 16 (or 31.4%) were disyllabic words and 11 (or 21.5%) were polysyllabic words. This finding supported that of Chapter Four.
- (iii) Of the 51 words mentioned in (ii) above, there were 67 segmental errors: 24 (or 35.8%) were errors related to E.T. C, 16 (or 23.9%), 11 (or 16.4%), 7 (or 10.4%), 5 (or 7.5%), and 2 (or 3.0%), were related to E.T. a, b, e, h, d/f, respectively. There was no occurrence of E.T. g.

On the surface, this finding may seem contradictory to that in Chapter Four, Table 4.6, with error gravity of segmental errors in this descending order: f, e, a, b, c, h, d, g. However, the Table included all segmental errors of all the words in the ten interviews, taking the lowest degree of intelligibility (ie those rated --h) of the mispronounced words at word level into account, regardless of the main causes of intelligibility problems of the words in context.

Similar results could have been obtained if a similar approach had been used in Appendix F: eg The two occurrences of the words with E.T. f, ie 'rehabilitate' and 'ambassador' had a very low degree of intelligibility, ie they were rated 92.9% at --h (cf. 66.7% in Table 4.6); the seven occurrences of the words with E.T. e, ie 'science', 'else', 'section' (4 occurrences) and 'dictionary' had a low degree of intelligibility too, ie they were rated 55.1% at --h, (cf. 33.8% in Table 4.6). On the other hand,

the two occurrences of the words with E.T. d, ie 'management' and 'development' had a high degree of intelligibility, ie they were rated 14.3% at --h. (cf. 14.9% in Table 4.6). Hence, there was a lot of parallelism between the two findings, when similar criteria were taken into consideration. In other words, when segmental errors were taken as the main criterion for determining intelligibility, E.T. f and e were deemed most serious and E.T. d and g, least serious.

- (iv) Of the twenty-six syntactically erroneous utterances, there were 58 syntactic errors. E.T. 12 occurred 9 times (or 15.5%); E.T. 15 and 18 occurred 6 times each (or 10.3%); E.T. 1, 7, 14, 16 occurred 5 times each (or 8.6%); E.T. 10 occurred 4 times (or 6.9%); E.T. 17 occurred 3 times (or 5.2%); E.T. 6 and 11 occurred twice each (or 3.4%); E.T. 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 13 occurred once (or 1.7%). There were no occurrences of E.T. 8.

The statistics of error gravity of syntactic errors prior to the identification of main causes of intelligibility problems, tabulated in Chapter Five, Table 5.6 was in the descending order: 17, 18, 16, 4, 7, 9, 1, 15, 13, 14, 11, 10/12, 6, 3/8, 2/5. There may be some discrepancy between the two findings. However, if similar criteria as those used in (iii) above were employed, more parallelism would reveal: eg. The seven and six occurrences of the utterances with E.T. 17 and 18 respectively, had a very low degree of intelligibility, ie they were rated 66.7% (cf. 57.1% in Table 5.6) and 42.9% (cf. 46.4% in Table 5.6) at --h, respectively. On the other hand, the only occurrence of utterances with E.T. 2 and 5 had an extremely high degree of intelligibility, ie they were both rated 0% at --h. (cf. 0% in Table 5.6 in both E.T. too). Hence, when syntactic errors were taken as the main criterion for determining intelligibility, E.T. 17 and 18 were deemed most serious and E.T. 2 and 5, least serious. (See also Chapter Eight, S. 8.1.1 to 8.1.5)

7.4.5 Interpretation of Results in Tables 3.5 to 3.8 in Chapter Three

(i) Table 3.5

Table 3.5 indicates that there was very little discrepancy between the total number of units of utterance rated at various degrees on the intelligibility rating scale for all listeners in each of the ten oral interviews. The only exception was with subject 8: the total number of units of utterance rated ++h ranged between 9 and 16 and those rated -h ranged between 2 and 11 for the seven British listeners. This clearly shows that there was not much discrepancy between the listeners' ability in rating intelligibility in each interview.

Table 3.5 also reveals that the speech of Subject 3 (Chinese) was the most difficult for the British listeners to understand, with 17.1% of utterances rated --h and 35.2% rated -h, a total of 52.3% of utterances causing intelligibility problems. On the other hand, Subject 6 (Indian) turned out to be the easiest to understand, with 3.4% of utterances rated --h and 20.3% rated -h, total of only 23.7% of utterances causing intelligibility problems.

As for the Malaysian listeners, the speech of Subject 4 (Chinese) seemed a little difficult for them to follow, with 1.3% of utterances rated --h and 3.1% rated -h, a total of 4.4% of utterances causing intelligibility problems. For the same listeners, 0% of the utterances of Subject 1 (Chinese) was rated --h but 7.7% was rated -h. Other subjects' speech hardly caused any intelligibility problems.

It was noted that apart from segmental errors which existed in all the interviews, Interview Three had a greater number of utterances with multiple syntactic errors and wrong cohesive links than other interviews. Besides, some utterances needed some shared sociocultural knowledge to interpret. This could be the main reason why it was most difficult for the British listeners to understand. It was also noted that for Malaysian listeners, lack of intelligibility in Interview Four only arose in the replacement of /r/ with /d/ and /f/ in the word 'room'.

The Table also reveals that Interview Ten was slightly more intelligible to the British listeners than Interview One: In Interview One, 11.5% of utterances was rated --h, 35.0% was rated -h, whereas in Interview

Ten, 5.4% of utterances was rated --h and 30.2% was rated -h. This could be due to the fact that the listeners were more familiar with Malaysian English after listening to nine interviews. Another reason could be that Interview One implied a number of social and cultural schemata that the British listeners were not familiar with, (See S. 7.3) whereas in Interview Ten, no such implication could be detected.

(ii) Table 3.6

It was found that Listener 2 scored the highest degree of intelligibility, with 67.2% of utterances in the whole corpus (ie these rated ++h, +h and h) intelligible, while Listener 1 scored the lowest degree of intelligibility, with 55.5% of the utterances intelligible.

For Malaysian listeners, Listener 10 (Chinese) scored the highest degree of intelligibility, with 97.8% of the utterances in the entire corpus intelligible and Listener 8 (Malay) scored the lowest degree of intelligibility, with 93.8% of utterances intelligible.

(iii) Table 3.7

Table 3.7 shows that 14.9% and 29.9% of all the Chinese subjects' utterances were totally unintelligible (ie those rated --h) and partially intelligible (ie those rated -h) to the British listeners, respectively, while only 6.0% and 2.3% of all the Indian subjects' utterances were totally unintelligible and partially intelligible to the same listeners, respectively. Hence, it can be concluded that, on the whole, the Chinese subjects' speech was the most difficult for British listeners to understand and the Indian subjects, the easiest. On the other hand, interestingly enough, for the Malaysian listeners, the Malay subjects' speech appeared to be slightly more difficult to understand than the Chinese counterparts: 0.6% of the Malay subjects' utterances was totally unintelligible to the Malaysian listeners while only 0.2% of the Chinese subjects' utterances was totally unintelligible to the same listeners. The Indian subjects, remained the easiest to understand, with no utterances totally unintelligible to the same listeners.

(iv) Table 3.8

Table 3.8 reveals that approximately 10.3% of the utterances produced by all the subjects constituted serious intelligibility problems for the British listeners (ie those rated --h) while only 0.3% constituted serious intelligibility problems for the Malaysian listeners. Approximately 27.2% of the utterances produced by all the subjects constituted some intelligibility problems for the British listeners (ie those rated -h), while only 3.6% constituted some intelligibility problems for the Malaysian listeners. Thus, it was evident that the Malaysian listeners who shared the linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of the subjects understood the interviews much better than the British listeners. This finding supports that of Brown (1968) and Smith and Bisazza (1982). (See Chapter Two, S. 2.5.2) Moreover, had the Malaysian listeners been given the opportunity to observe the oral interviews while they were being conducted, the likelihood is that all the utterances would have been intelligible to all of them. The machine-operated channel placed some burden even on the Malaysian listeners during the process of listening. (See also Chapter Two, S. 2.4.3) Despite the complexity involved in intelligibility, the British listeners' intelligibility of ME was relatively high on the whole, ie approximately 62.5% of all the subjects' utterances (ie those rated ++h, +h and h) was intelligible.

In this chapter, I have analysed the results of D.C. Two and Three. Based on the consolidation of all the findings, I have attempted to establish criteria for determining the main causes of intelligibility problems with utterances rated -h and --h in the main corpus. In the next chapter, I shall look into the possible remediation strategies in dealing with these problems in a classroom situation in Malaysia.

CHAPTER EIGHT

REMEDICATION STRATEGIES AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the consolidation of findings on the main causes of intelligibility problems in Chapter Seven, remediation strategies as to how to deal with such problems can now be suggested. However, before specific strategies or a teaching methodology can be recommended, it is necessary to have an overview of what constitutes a spoken English course for Malaysian university students.

Moreover, although the present study only discusses the intelligibility of Malaysian university students' English speech for British native-speaker ie only the production of their spoken English was discussed, it is also necessary to examine briefly the students' reception of native-speaker's spoken English so that their areas of weaknesses can be identified. These areas can, thus, be incorporated into the course content.

8.1 Intelligibility Problem Areas and the Teaching of Spoken English

As was discussed in Chapter Seven, intelligibility problems could occur at the segmental, suprasegmental, syntactic, lexical or discourse level or a combination of any of these levels. It was also found that as far as the intelligibility of ME for British native-speakers is concerned, lack of shared knowledge plays a larger role than acoustic problems or syntactic errors. However, since background knowledge is probably best provided in face-to-face interactions with native speakers, no specific action can, in fact, be taken to deal substantially with this problem in a short spoken English course for Malaysian students. However, the importance of background knowledge in spoken discourse gives teachers the valuable insight that background knowledge related to whatever teaching materials they are using should be provided to students. Before remedial measures aimed at solving intelligibility problems arising at various levels can be discussed, specific intelligibility problem areas which require special attention in the course content, should be identified.

8.1.1 Segmental Errors Affecting Intelligibility

Table 7.5 in Chapter Seven shows that 28.2% of the intelligibility problems with utterances rated -h and --h was attributed to segmental

errors. Since segmental errors constituted more than a quarter of the intelligibility problems, it is deemed necessary to incorporate some kind of pronunciation teaching into a spoken English course for Malaysian university students. It was also found that of these segmental errors, the frequency of error type c ie replacement of one consonant phoneme with another and error type a ie replacement of one vowel phoneme with another was much higher than error types d, e, f, g and h. (S.7.4.4.1) A closer examination of the specific errors of type c (See App. F) reveals that the frequency of mispronunciation of consonant phonemes /r/ and /dʒ/, especially in monosyllabic words was much higher than mispronunciation of /ʒ/, /θ/, /ʃ/ and /v/. It was also evident that mispronunciation of /r/ of Chinese subjects, especially in monosyllabic words affected intelligibility for nearly all the British listeners whereas mispronunciation of other consonant phonemes mentioned above only affected intelligibility for some of the listeners.

As far as vowel phonemes were concerned, the frequency of the shortening of /i:/ and mispronunciation of /ɑ/ was higher than mispronunciation of diphthongs /eɪ/, /əʊ/, /ɛə/ and /Iə/. All these vowel only affected intelligibility for some of the British listeners.

Segmental errors which had a low frequency of occurrence but affected intelligibility for nearly all the British listeners were (i) Error type e ie elision of a phoneme, especially the phonemes /l/ and /k/ in medial positions and monosyllabic words; (ii) Error type f ie elision of a syllable. Segmental errors which had a low frequency of occurrence and only affected intelligibility for some of the British listeners were (i) Error type h ie unaspirated voiceless phonemes in initial positions, especially phonemes /p/ and /t/ and, in particular , in monosyllabic words, (iii) Error type b ie monophthongization of diphthongs, especially /əʊ/ and /eɪ/.

It, thus, seems that segmental errors related to consonants caused more intelligibility problems than those related to vowels. In pronunciation teaching, segmental errors which gave rise to intelligibility problems for most native-speakers should it would appear be given more emphasis than those which did not. In addition,

emphasis should also be given to those mispronounced consonants and vowels with high frequency of occurrence in English generally, as quoted by Gimson (1970:148 and 219) eg /r/, /ʒ/, /w/, /z/, /v/, /eI/, /i:/, /əv/, /æ/ and /ɔ:/. Besides, as nearly half of the intelligibility problems (ie 47.1%) pertaining to segmental errors were monosyllabic words (Chapter Seven, S.7.4.4.1), more attention should be paid to correct pronunciation of these words.

8.1.2 Suprasegmental Errors Affecting Intelligibility

Table 7.5 in Chapter Seven indicates that intelligibility problems arising at the suprasegmental level were of much less importance (ie 12.1%). Moreover, when intelligibility problems did occur at this level, it did not normally affect intelligibility for all the British listeners. However, intelligibility problems pertaining to errors in tonegrouping seemed to affect intelligibility for more British listeners than other types of suprasegmental errors. Stress errors, too, affected intelligibility for some of the listeners. Other suprasegmental 'errors' such as different rhythmic and intonation patterns as well as absence of tonic syllable did not, on the whole, affect intelligibility substantially. Hence, students' errors in tone grouping and stress should be pointed out and corrected.

8.1.3 Syntactic Errors Affecting Intelligibility

Table 7.5 in Chapter Seven reveals that 21.0% of the intelligibility problems was attributed to syntactic errors. It was also found that intelligibility problems occurring at this level normally affected intelligibility for nearly all the British listeners and were usually rated --h. This finding implies that certain syntactic errors could cause serious intelligibility problems. A careful examination of the details (App. F) shows that utterances with multiple errors and with error types 15 to 18 affected intelligibility for all or nearly all listeners and, in particular, error types 17 and 18 ie utterance with wrong word order and incoherent elements, respectively. As for error types 1 to 14, utterances with error types 12 ie utterances with omission/addition of adverbs or conjunctions, misuse and misplacement of adverbs or conjunctions,

and error type 7 ie utterances with omission of subject or object, affected intelligibility for more listeners than the other error types. Except for utterances with multiple errors, error types 2 and 8 ie utterances with wrong tense and utterances with omission/addition of subject pronoun, respectively, did not seem to affect intelligibility.

Hence, remediation strategies as to how to cope with students' utterances with wrong word order and phrases that need restructuring need to be carefully devised. In addition, as nearly all the incoherent elements in error type 18 were closely related to the elements of 'fluency', 'fluency' in speech is one of the skills that Malaysian university students should acquire. (See also S.8.2 below)

8.1.4 Lexical Errors Affecting Intelligibility

Table 7.5 in Chapter Seven also indicates that only a small amount (ie 4.8%) of the intelligibility problems was due to lexical errors. Though wrong lexical words were seldom used, when it happened, it normally affected intelligibility for nearly all the listeners. Hence, correct word choice should be emphasized in students' speech.

8.1.5 Discourse Elements Affecting Intelligibility

As was indicated in Table 7.5, nonlinguistic variables at the discourse level presented the greatest barrier to intelligibility for the British listeners. Of the discourse factors affecting intelligibility, lack of shared background or schematic knowledge constituted 90.2% and incorrect cohesive links and incoherence constituted only 9.8%. Lack of shared background or schematic knowledge included (i) no shared knowledge of proper names, (ii) no shared knowledge of social or cultural practices, (iii) no shared knowledge of alternative 'code'. (Chapter Seven, S.7.4.3) Intelligibility problems related to all these factors can be best resolved during the process of interaction by means of negotiations between the speaker and the listener. (S.8.1) However, to prevent students from forming the habit of code-switching, steps should be taken to discourage students from using alternative 'code' in their speech, except for lexical items, such as 'kampung' and 'satay' which do not have exact equivalence in English, and of course all local place names.

8.2 Other Factors

Having identified all the specific intelligibility problem areas at the various levels, it is perhaps appropriate at this juncture to examine other factors which can contribute to the spoken English course content before remediation strategies dealing with such problems can be recommended.

8.2.1 Analysis of Data Collection Four : Listening Test

A speech test, read by an RP speaker of English, was conducted in March 1985 in the language laboratories of the language Centre, Universiti Sains Malaysia. The aims of this piece of data collection were:

- (i) to find out whether Malaysian university students had difficulty in identifying the phonemes which they had problems in producing;
- (ii) to detect students' general areas of weaknesses in pronunciation;
- (iii) to gauge students' general listening ability.

(For detailed analysis see App. G(1) and G(2))

The results can be summarized as follow:

- (1) At the segmental level, it was found that there was a close relation between production difficulty and reception difficulty. (1) eg
As far as vowel phonemes are concerned, generally speaking, Malaysian students do not have difficulty in producing or identifying the vowel phonemes /ʌ/, /ə/ and /ʊ/. However, they have great difficulty in differentiating the following:
 - (a) /e/ and /æ/ eg 'bet' was heard 'bag'; 'bat' or 'bad'; 'peddling' was heard 'paddling'; 'begging' was heard 'bagging' or vice versa.
(Possible explanation: Many Malaysian students, especially Chinese, pronounce /æ/ as /ɛ/ which is sometimes indistinguishable from /e/).

- (b) /ɔ:/ and /ʊ/ eg 'balder' was heard 'bolder';
 'bolder' was heard 'bother', 'broader', 'border'.
 (Possible explanation: Malaysian students generally pronounce /ʊ/ as /o/ or /o:/ which sounds like /ɔ:/)
- (c) /eI/ and /e/ eg 'wail' was heard 'well'; 'saint' was heard 'sent' or 'send'. (Possible explanation: Malaysian students generally monophthongize /eI/ to /e/)
- (d) /eI/ and /I/ eg 'wail' was heard 'will'; 'saint' was heard 'sing', 'sink' or 'sin'. (Possible explanation: /eI/ does not exist in many Malaysians' speech and for them, the second element of the diphthong, /I/ seems more prominent than the first, so they perceive the /I/ but not the /e/ in the onset of the phoneme.)
- (e) There was confusion between long and short words:
- (1) between /i:/ and /I/ eg 'least' was heard 'list'; 'lease' was heard 'list'; 'lift' was heard 'leaf' or 'leave';
 - (2) between /ɔ:/ and /ʊ/ eg 'cot' was heard 'caught' or 'court'. (Possible explanation: Malaysian students generally do not make the distinction between long and short vowels and there is a strong tendency to shorten vowels especially in closed syllables.)
- (See also Chapter Four, S.4.3.8 and 4.3.9)

In terms of consonant phonemes, Malaysian students do not have difficulty in producing or identifying the phonemes /b/, /d/, /g/ in initial positions and /m/, /n/ and /tʃ/. However, they had great difficulty in differentiating the following:

- (a) /v/ and /w/ eg 'a veil' was heard 'a whale', 'away', 'a well' or 'a wail'; 'viper' was heard 'wiper', 'wide', 'whisper'. (Possible explanation: Malaysian students generally pronounce /v/ as /w/ or /ʊ/)

- (b) /ʒ/, /v/, and /d/ and /t/ eg 'latter' was heard 'lever', 'level', 'lover' or 'ladder'; 'ladder' was heard 'lather', 'leather'; 'den' was heard 'then', 'than', 'tank', 'ten' or 'tent'.
(Possible explanation: Malaysian students generally pronounce /ʒ/ as /d/. Thus, when the sound /ʒ/ which is absent in their speech is heard, it is often perceived as the voiced consonants /v/; the consonant /d/ is perceived as 'ʒ/' as it is their own pronunciation of the 'th' sound; /t/ is often unaspirated in Malaysian students' speech, thus /d/ and /t/ are barely distinguishable)
- (c) /θ/, /f/ and /t/ eg 'thought' was heard 'fought', 'fourth', 'forth', 'fault' and in a few cases 'taught', 'talk'; 'path' was heard 'puff' or 'part'. (Possible explanation: similar to (b) above)
- (d) There was confusion between voiced consonants and their voiceless counterparts:
- (1) /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ eg 'ridges' was heard 'reaches', 'richest', 'richness'; 'badges' was heard 'batch', 'beach'. (Possible explanation: Malaysian students generally substitute voiced consonants in final positions with their voiceless counterparts in their own speech).
 - (2) /z/ and /s/ eg 'sins' was heard 'since', 'sinks' and 'seen'; 'since' was heard 'sin', 'seen', 'sink'. (Possible explanation: similar to d(1) above; also words ending with /s/ and inflection /s/ are generally not pronounced in Malaysian students' speech)
 - (3) /v/ and /f/ eg 'leave' was heard 'lift', 'leaf'; 'live' was heard 'leaf', 'lift'.
(Possible explanation: similar to d (1) above)

- (e) /nd/ and /n/ eg 'band' was heard 'ban', 'ben'.
(Possible explanation: Reduction of consonant clusters in final positions in Malaysia students' own speech).
- (f) /st/ and /s/ eg 'last' was heard 'less'; 'raced' was heard 'raise', 'race'. (Possible explanation: similar to (e) above).
- (g) Difficulty in perceiving consonant clusters in medial positions. eg
'paddling' was heard 'padding', 'peddling' was heard 'pedding' (?) (Possible explanation: there is elision of phonemes /l/ and /k/ especially in consonant clusters /dl/ and /ks/ in some Malaysian students' speech)
- (h) Difficulty in identifying the final consonants of a word. eg 'fed' was heard 'fat'; 'fared' was heard 'fat'; 'laid' was heard 'late'.
(Possible explanation: in most Malaysian students' speech, plosives in final positions are normally unreleased; confusion between voiced consonants and their voiceless counterparts).
(See also Chapter Four, S.4.3.8 and 4.3.9)

Moreover, it was found that as far as vowel phonemes were concerned, the order of perception difficulty (from most difficult to least difficult) was : ɒ, ɑ:, ɔ:, eɪ, i:, ɛə, e, æ, ʌ, ɪ, Iə and ʌ. As for consonant phonemes and consonant clusters, the order of perception difficulty was:

z, dʒ, v, st, nd, θ, l, d, s, ʒ, n, w, t, r, tʃ and ʃ.

In addition, the subjects seemed to have more problems

- (i) identifying vowel phonemes than consonant phonemes,
- (ii) identifying voiced consonants than voiceless consonants,
- (iii) identifying long vowels than short vowels.

(ii) At the suprasegmental level, the following was noted:

(a) Word Stress

The subjects had more difficulty detecting stress

in pairs or groups of words with different numbers of syllables than those with the same number of syllables.

- (b) Generally speaking, there was a tendency to mark the primary stress on the syllable following the actually stressed syllable.
- (c) There was some relation between the marking of primary stress on words and the placing of primary stress in terms of ethnic origin. eg the Malay subjects tended to mark the primary stress on the penultimate syllables of the polysyllabic words, the Chinese on the last syllable and the Indians on the first or last syllables. (See Chapter Four, S.4.5.3)

(b) Tonic syllable

Though the subjects had considerable difficulty identifying word stress, on the whole, they did not have problems identifying tonic syllables in sentences.

(c) Tone grouping

It was found that, on the whole, the subjects had no problem in tone group identification.

(d) Intonation contours (tones)

Generally speaking, the subjects had no problem identifying intonation contours. (The understanding of attitudinal meaning was not taken into consideration here).

(iii) In listening comprehension, it was found that

- (a) the overall performance of questions formulated on pure semantic grounds was much better than those formulated on pure phonological grounds.
- (b) apart from some difficult lexical items, the phonological elements in those questions formulated on both phonological and semantic grounds

affected the overall performance of the subjects most.

To sum up, the results show that the subjects' perception of English pronunciation at the suprasegmental level was better than that of the segmental level. This is another good indication that in teaching pronunciation to Malaysian university students, emphasis should be laid on segmental errors rather suprasegmental 'errors'.

8.2.2 Feedback from Interviews and Survey

(i) Feedback from Interviews

In an attempt to get some feedback on the need for a course in spoken English for Malaysian university students, interviews were held with the Deans of all the Schools in Universiti Sains Malaysia in 1982. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. Though it was found that the needs of the students for taking the course were perceived as rather heterogeneous, broadly speaking, it was felt that the course should be geared to the following objectives :

- (a) Academic purposes: mainly for postgraduate work overseas. Some important skills students need to achieve were:
 - (1) Listening: eg understanding lectures.
 - (2) Speaking: communication and interaction with lecturers and collegemates. eg asking questions for clarification of lecture content; group discussion on lectures or lecture notes.
 - (3) Study skills: note-taking, oral presentation of term papers, reports etc.
- (b) Occupational purposes : mainly in job requirements.

Some important skills students need to develop were:

- (1) Listening: to listen to and comprehend the requests and queries of clients and firms.
- (2) Speaking: to express oneself; voice opinions at meetings, seminars, conferences; to promote products; to deal with staff, colleagues and clients etc
- (3) Executive skills: oral presentation of reports; chairing meetings etc.

- (c) Social Purposes: mainly for personal and social needs. Some important skills students need to develop were:
- (1) Listening: to understand messages etc conveyed through the mass media. eg television, radio.
 - (2) Speaking: to communicate with English-speaking friends or colleagues in everyday life.

(ii) Feedback from Survey

In an investigation to get some feedback on Malaysian university students' purpose of learning and improving their spoken English, a survey (using a questionnaire) was carried out in March 1985. (For details, see App. H) The feedback can be summarized as follows:

The survey shows that about half (ie 45.6%) of the subjects rated their own spoken English as 'poor', 28.1% rated it 'average' and 26.3% 'very poor'. Their own rating was, in fact, a reflection of their admission to limited exposure to spoken English: the

majority of the subjects admitted that they 'seldom' used spoken English either at home, communicating with friends or in the market, and the majority of the subjects 'seldom' watched English television programmes or listened to English radio programmes. This being the case, the majority of them either understood about 50% or only 25% of these programmes. The feedback also indicates that about half (ie 45.6%) of the subjects would like to follow a spoken English course with standard British English (RP) as a model of teaching whereas only 29.8% and 27.6% would like to take a similar course with Malaysian English and American English as a model, respectively.

Moreover, of the four language skills ie listening, speaking, reading and writing, 65% of the subjects considered speaking to be the most important skill whereas only 21%, 10.5% and 3.5% felt that listening, reading and writing were most important, respectively. Thus, it is evident that there is a growing awareness of the importance of spoken English among Malaysian university students because they have fewer and fewer opportunities to use the spoken language both inside and outside the classroom. (See also Chapter One, S.1.4.4)

There is also a growing urge to improve spoken English primarily for communicative purposes: 32.4% of the subjects wanted to improve their spoken English for social purposes, 26.9% for occupational or professional purposes, 24.8% for educational or academic purposes, while only 15.9% expressed the view that it was because of their personal interest that they would like to improve their spoken English. Besides, the subjects seemed to be more keen to improve their general fluency (ie 33.6%) in spoken English than other aspects ie vowel/consonants (22.6%), stress (22.6%), intonation (21.2%). In

other words 'fluency' rather than 'accuracy' in pronunciation seemed to be their top priority in the speaking skills. There was also evidence that they felt they needed to increase their vocabulary (31.3%), to improve their grammar (28.8%) and pronunciation (27.6%) in order to be more proficient in spoken English.

Hence the feedback from the interviews and survey helps to provide course designers with a general idea as to what kind of spoken English course they should design to cater for the specific needs of Malaysian university students: It was generally felt that

- (i) the course should be student-centred;
- (ii) standard British English (RP) should be used as a model of English for teaching purposes;
- (iii) the course should be designed primarily for communicative purposes. ie how to use English in real life situation;
- (iv) in order to achieve communicative purposes more efficiently, greater emphasis should be given to 'fluency' rather than 'accuracy';
- (v) there is a need for improving students' grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary.

The findings boil down to the conclusion that traditional syllabuses for such a cause may not prove very fruitful. On the other hand, more recent concepts of language teaching may be more beneficial. Two of the most important concepts are:

(i) 'Accuracy' and 'fluency'

Traditional syllabuses have always had a basis in the accurate construction of the target language, written or spoken. However, 'accuracy' or 'correctness' is a relative term based on social judgements about the language used by a speech community. Moreover, unlike teaching the written language where good

models of almost of any kind of writing can be used and the end-product of the students can be graded 'right' or 'wrong', 'good' or 'bad', it is not certain what constitutes the notion of 'accuracy' or 'correctness' in spoken language. Brown and Yule (1983 (a) : 21), for instance, argue:

It is not all obvious what sort of model is appropriate to offer the foreign learner since native spoken language so obviously reflects the "performance" end of the competence-performance distinction. It reveals so many examples of slips, errors, incompleteness, produced by the speaker, speaking in the here-and-now, under pressure of time, trying to tie in what he is saying now with what he has just said, and while he is simultaneously working out what he is about to say.

Brumfit (1979:187-8) also points out that a syllabus based on accuracy must be based on a model devised by a descriptive linguist and 'to insist on a model of accuracy, whether conceived in grammatical or functional terms, entails taking a number of risks: that inflexibility will be trained through too close a reference to a descriptive model, that adaptability and ability to improvise will be neglected, that written forms will tend to dominate spoken forms and so on.' On the other hand, Brumfit claims that in a second-language teaching situation, 'fluency-based teaching may be closer to the apparent learner syllabus of the natural learner in a total immersion situation, in that the naive learner operates more on an oral basis of fluent and inaccurate language than on a careful building up analytically of accurate items according to a descriptive model', and he posits that such a basis will lead us 'to focus on how what is known is used, rather than on the form of what is known.'

(ii) Language 'Usage' and 'Use'

Traditional syllabuses often focus on developing students' four language skills ie listening, speaking, reading and writing. Widdowson (1978: 1-4) sees the inadequacy of acquiring only these skills in language learning as 'someone knowing a language knows more than how to understand, speak, read and write sentences. He also knows how sentences are used to communicative effect.' Besides, he argues that when we acquire a language, 'we do not learn how to compose and comprehend correct sentences as isolated linguistic units of random occurrence, we also learn how to use sentences appropriately to achieve a communicative purpose.' He terms the former ability, language 'usage' which is 'an aspect of performance' which 'makes evident the extent to which the language user demonstrates his knowledge of linguistic rules,' and he calls the latter, language 'use' which is 'another aspect of performance' that 'makes evident the extent to which the language user demonstrates his ability to use his knowledge of linguistic rules for effective communication.' Language 'use' should play a more important role in spoken discourse than language 'usage', and as Widdowson puts it:

When we are engaged in conversation we do not as a rule take note of such usage phenomena as grammatical irregularities (which may be quite frequent) in the speech of the person we are talking to, unless they force themselves on our attention by impeding communication. Our concern is with use and this concern filters out such irregularities of usage. (P.3-4)

In other words, in spoken discourse, 'usage phenomena' will only be taken into consideration when intelligibility

problems arise. These principles underlie the communicative approach to language teaching, with the assumption that the approach is concerned with language use in the classroom and not language usage and that language can be effectively learned by using it in realistic situations.

8.2.3 The Spoken English Course in USM

The two levels of Spoken English course viz. Intermediate Spoken English and Advanced Spoken English offered at the Language Centre in Universiti Sains Malaysia are tailored to the specific needs of the students in the University. Each level is a one-semester course and the total number of contact hours for each level is fifty-six. A perusal of the general and specific objectives of the course, course outline and some samples of lesson plans (See App. I (1) and I (2)) indicates that the course is based on a communicative syllabus and objectives are stated primarily in terms of communicative functions and not in terms of linguistic items although this component is incorporated into the syllabus. It is evident that rapid progress to a highly functional variety of English is essential for students. Hence, in this approach, the objectives determine the functions needed, and the functions determine the selection and sequencing of grammatical materials. The units of organization are primarily functional and secondarily notional. In this sense, it is similar to the functional-notional approach described by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983: 13):

A functional-notional approach concentrates on the purpose for which language is used. Any act of speech is functionally organized (that is, it is an attempt to do something) for a particular situation in relation to a particular topic. ... It places major emphasis on the communicative purpose(s) of a speech act. It focuses on what people want to do or what they want to accomplish through speech.

It is on these functions, notions, settings, topics, social roles and ranges etc that the production of the basic units for oral work is based, usually with a situational application and with emphasis on various functions. Generally, a central function is chosen for each unit, with subsidiary ones supporting it. The functions thus chosen are matched to a general situation and to specific topics. The units are then organized, often in pair or group work or in the form of role plays or simulated dialogues or conversation. The language forms and vocabulary are drawn from the language activities. For instance, in Unit 1, Lesson 2, the central communicative function of the unit is 'greetings and starting a conversation.' Students are taught how to answer common questions asked when people first meet in general situations eg 'Where are you from?' and 'What do you do?'. Specific topics on 'greetings' will then be introduced ie cultural discussion about 'greetings and starting conversations'. eg 'Are there any questions that are considered impolite by certain cultures when you first meet?' (For details, see App. I(2)).

8.3 Remediation Strategies and Teaching Implications

Since the Spoken English course is based on a syllabus with emphasis on communication, it has several immediate implications:

- (i) As the main objective of the course is teaching communication via spoken English rather than teaching spoken English for communication, the emphasis is laid on 'fluent' natural language use rather than 'accurate' language usage. Accordingly, 'fluency' language activities rather than 'accuracy' language activities ought to be encouraged. (2) Thus, fluency-based language work such as pair and group activities, role play and simulated exercises play an important role in the classroom.
- (ii) The classroom is student-centred: students should be encouraged to talk freely, express their own thoughts and feelings without too much concern for precise accuracy.

It is, however, beyond the scope of this study to discuss in detail how the above can be carried out effectively. My main concern is

how teachers can help students to overcome their apparent weaknesses in speech, which may cause intelligibility problems for native-speakers of English, during their classroom activities. In connection with this, several questions have to be raised:

In a spoken English course like that outlined above,

- (i) What is the role of the teacher?
- (ii) Should the English sound system be taught formally or informally?
- (iii) Should English syntax be taught formally or informally? Should grammatical items be chosen sequentially or at random?
- (iv) How can students be taught to use appropriate lexis in particular discourses?
- (v) How can background knowledge be incorporated into the curriculum?

The answers to the above questions are discussed as follows:

8.3.1 The Role of the Teacher

- (i) Since the curriculum of the spoken English course is centrally based on students' needs, students should be allowed to use the language freely as all language learners do in natural conditions. In other words, the main concern is to develop the ability of students to use the language they are learning for the purpose of communication. Thus, what should be greatly emphasized is fluency rather than academic accuracy. Moreover, it is extremely difficult for a learner to communicate naturally while in the meantime concentrate on the form rather than the content of his speech (and, in fact, too much concern for accuracy may impede fluency), it is therefore not advisable for the teacher to point out every error the students make. (3) The implication for methodology here is obvious: (a) pointing out errors repeatedly will interrupt the flow of students' language activities; (b) being adult learners, too

much correction will discourage students from taking active part in language activities; (c) students should not be made too aware of committing errors but should regard the language as a tool for expressing their thoughts and feelings. However, this does not imply that there is no need for 'accuracy' as too many errors will definitely interfere with intelligibility. Perhaps the teacher should not correct errors immediately unless they prevent students from being able to perform the activity naturally or interfere with intelligibility during the activity.

On the one hand, the teacher can record students' general common errors and incorporate them into later teaching as a form of 'remedial' teaching. On the other, the teacher can make a separate list of students' errors at the segmental, suprasegmental, syntactic, lexical and discourse levels and place them in order of error gravity according to the findings in Chapters Four to Seven. Special attention should be given to errors which normally cause intelligibility problems and for these errors, remedial 'accuracy' rather than 'fluency' work should be carried out. (See also (ii) below)

- (ii) Harmer (1983: 200-204) points out that a teacher should play the role of a 'controller', 'assessor', 'organizer', 'prompter', 'participant' and 'resource'. Speaking specifically of the spoken English course, these roles should only be fulfilled in some circumstances:

- (a) As a 'controller' or 'leader' (Hoyle's term, 1969: 59), the teacher is totally in charge of the class, controlling what students do, how they speak and the language they use. This role is very important when new language is introduced, particularly at the accurate reproduction stage and in 'accuracy' language

activities. For instance, when the students were reproducing certain problem sounds in English pronunciation or grammatical structures which they always get wrong. However, in communicative output ie during communication activities, control has to be relaxed as if all the language used is determined by the teacher, students will never have the opportunity to use the language freely.

- (b) As an 'assessor', the teacher's role is to assess students' performances. When students are involved in 'accuracy'-based language activities, the teacher's role as 'assessor' is to point out students' errors and correct them. On the other hand, when students are involved in 'fluency'-based language activities eg game-type activity in pairs, immediate correction may not be necessary. (See (i) above)

As an 'assessor', the teacher gets two kinds of feedback: (1) content feedback, which concerns assessment of the performance of the activity rather than accurate use of language. As Harmer puts it, 'it centres on the content or subject matter of an activity: it aims to give students feedback on their degree of communicative efficiency.' (P.202)

(2) form feedback which concerns assessment of the accurate use of language. The former can be adopted after students have done their 'fluency' language work and the latter, often they have done their 'accuracy' language work.

- (c) As an 'organizer', the teacher's role is 'to tell students what they are going to talk about, give clear instruction about what exactly their task is, get the activity going and then organize feedback when it is over.' The teacher first 'leads in' the activity ie introduces the subject.

then, he 'instructs' ie explains exactly what the students should do and finally he 'initiates' the activity ie to get the students involved in the activity.

- (d) As a 'prompter', the teacher provides students with information they have forgotten, gives them incentives or ideas for further activity when there is silence, puts them on the right track when they are confused about what to do next during an activity.
- (e) As a 'participant', the teacher sometimes has to help students to start off an activity by participating in it. However, once the activity is taking shape, he should withdraw from participation and allow students to carry on with the activity. Otherwise the teacher may tend to play a dominant role which defeats the main purpose of this style of teaching and learning.
- (f) As a 'resource', the teacher may act as a 'walking resource centre' ie be ready to offer help if it is needed.

(iii) It is extremely rare to have a class made up of homogeneous students in terms of intellectual ability or language aptitude, and as Byrne (1976:3) points out, there are 'enormous differences in learning skills, aspiration, interests, background and above all personality'. Thus, to ensure progress, the teacher has to take these individual differences into consideration: eg he has to employ different and flexible teaching strategies in dealing with students with different problems; he has to compromise on the pace of teaching, neither too fast for the weaker students to follow nor too slow to bore the better ones.

(iv) Though RP is considered a suitable model of teaching, (See Chapter One, S.1.6.3), students should also be

given opportunities to as wide a variety as possible different native speakers' voices and accents. As was discovered in the survey (S.8.2.1), limited exposure to spoken English is one of the main causes that hinders students from developing their speaking skills, the teacher should introduce students to the varieties of native-speaker English through the mass media eg television and radio programmes, and through the excellent range of recorded materials now available.

8.3.2 The Teaching of Pronunciation in the Malaysian Spoken English Course

8.3.2.1 Formal or Informal Instruction

It was pointed out in Section 8.2.3 that since the primary goal of the Malaysian Spoken English course is for communicative purposes, intelligible speech and conversational fluency rather than accuracy should be emphasized. Pronunciation teaching, which was traditionally viewed as a component of linguistics rather than communicative competence and an aspect of accuracy rather than conversational fluency should thus play a limited role in curriculum. In other words, limited time should be spent on the teaching of pronunciation when the need arises and the procedure of instruction should, therefore, be informal rather than formal. Pennington and Richards (1986: 217) share this view:

Currently, acquisition-or communication-based methodologies do not assign a central role to direct instruction in pronunciation, nor do many bilingual education models, which set the goal at intelligibility rather than native-like phonology. It is assumed in these models that target-like pronunciation will eventually result from interaction with native speakers in naturalistic settings and cannot be achieved through formal instruction.

Besides, even formal instruction may not compensate for students' lack of opportunity to interact with native speakers.

8.3.2.2 Factors Influencing the Ultimate Levels of Achievement in Phonology

Among others, two important factors which influence the ultimate levels of achievement in phonology are:

(1) Age of Learners

It is generally believed that there is a biological advantage for younger learners in learning pronunciation. (Seliger, Krashen and Ladefoged 1975, Acton 1984). Acton (1984:71), for instance, points out:

It is almost axiomatic that once one reaches puberty, the ability to learn a second language, including the possibility of acquiring a native-like accent, begins to deteriorate.

However, other studies such as Neufeld's (1980: 296-297) have shown that there is no such advantage:

I have found less and less evidence for the decay or inaccessibility of the language acquisition device or system in older learners. Furthermore, the results of the 1974 study, in which we taught anglo-phone subjects to reproduce lengthy sound sequences in three non-Indo-European languages, suggests that adults have not lost their ability to perceive and produce novel sounds..... There was strong evidence to demonstrate retained flexibility of the adults' articulatory apparatus.

Flege's (1981:413) study also shows that there is no fundamental difference between children and adults in phonetic learning ability and that an adult or child learner of a foreign language may retain the same kind of phonetic learning ability evident in early childhood and yet still speak with an accent because 'phonological translation provides a two-language source of phonetic input that may ultimately limit progress in learning to pronounce a foreign language'.

Olson and Samuels' (1973: 267) findings are, in fact, just the contrary: 'The assumption is that younger children learn to produce foreign words with a more native-like accent than older people. Not only is this assumption not supported by the test results but the trend is in a reverse direction favoring older students '. They came to the conclusion that 'the age-language acquisition relationships favoring younger students hold for first languages only. Therefore, we must distinguish between first and second language learning.... in stating that the biological conditions which are important in primary language learning are not so important in second language learning.'

Contradictory these findings may seem, but it is generally agreed that there is some evidence of the retention of L1 acoustic features by adult second language learners, as Neufeld (1980:296) admits: 'The only consistent indicator of adult inferiority that I can find is the average learner's inability to get rid of a foreign accent when speaking L2.' Yet, there are always exceptional adult individuals such as actors, actresses, linguists and spies who learn to speak an L2 without a foreign accent.

(ii) 'Fossilization ' in L2 Learners' Pronunciation

It is also well-known belief that once adult L2 learners have achieved a certain level of competence in the target language, their pronunciation becomes inevitably 'fossilized'. (ie a point at which development towards the target language norm stops, Selinker, 1972) Hence, instruction in phonology will be of little avail as the learners' pronunciation is, by now, highly resistant to change. Suter (1976) and Madden (1983), for instance, find no positive effect of training on achievement in pronunciation. However, results of other investigations indicate the reverse. Acton (1984), for instance, designed an unorthodox twelve-week teaching programme for adult learners whose pronunciation was 'fossilized' and found that 'whereas pronunciation of individual phonological segments may not improve radically in unmonitored spontaneous speech in twelve weeks, the change in overall intelligibility, in virtually all contexts, is unmistakable.' (P.81)

Positive effects on production and perception were also reported for training in prosodic features by de Bot (1983) whose study shows a significant effect of audio-visual feedback over auditory feedback in intonation whereas practice time does not seem to be a major factor. de Bot and Mailfert's (1982) study also indicates that training in the perception of intonation resulted in a statistically significant improvement in the production of English intonation patterns.

Differences in the results of the studies mentioned in (a) and (b) above seem to be due to the variation in experimental design and the type of training provided. It thus seems that the degree of achievement in pronunciation depends very much on the kind of instruction given, irrespective of whether the L2 learner is young or old, and whether his pronunciation is 'fossilized' or not.

Hence, it is believed that there is still room to improve the pronunciation of Malaysian university students, all adult L2 learners of English whose pronunciation is, to a great extent, 'fossilized'. It must be emphasized that there may not be significant improvement in their pronunciation through pronunciation training, it is, however, believed that the overall intelligibility for native-speakers will be higher.

8.3.2.3 Teaching the Production of Segmental Accuracy

Most linguists do not see a need for accurate production of sound at the segmental level as they believe this does not affect intelligibility. Pennington and Richards (1986:218), for instance, point out: 'Accuracy at the segmental level is no longer the fundamental aim of teaching, since it is now known that accurate production of segmental features does not in itself characterize native-like pronunciation, nor is it the primary basis for intelligible speech.'

Norrish (1983:54) also claims that context can provide the solution for sound distinction at the segmental level and 'problems of comprehension of speech are generally not related to the failure to recognize these sound distinctions. so the fact that there might be a discrepancy between the learner's speech sounds and the native speaker's need not lead to a learner's failure to comprehend a native speaker's spoken message.'

On the other hand, a few linguists view segmental inaccuracy as a barrier to intelligibility. Tench (1981:42) makes this point:

Accuracy is required in every aspect of language: consistently inaccurate spelling impairs intelligibility, for instance; inaccuracy in the form of words and the structure of clauses and sentences, inaccurate choice of vocabulary, incorrect choice of style all contribute to the distortion of communication. But nothing distorts like articulation.

There was some evidence in the present study that inaccurate articulation of sounds sometimes affected intelligibility, especially in monosyllabic words and in cases where context did not provide sufficient clues as to what the incorrectly articulated words referred to. (For details, see Chapter Four) Some examples are:

- (a) But Muar is quite famous because Muar they got they got a bridge [brɪtɪ]. (Int. Four, Utt. 5)
- (b) Actually, we rent [d en] the two room [dvm] la. (Int. Four, Utt. 22)

Hence, incorrect articulation of sounds should not be treated lightly, and some kind of pronunciation practice is essential. Among others, the following methods are recommended for reasons stated below:

Training in phonemic distinctions

Since segmental features are minimal units of sound, defined in phonemic terms, the fundamental approach is the training of phonemic distinctions, for instance, by means of minimal pairs. This method, I believe, is by far the most effective as far as training in segmental correctness is concerned, and has these advantages:

- (a) Based on the findings in intelligibility problems pertaining to segmental errors (Chapters Four and Seven) and perception difficulty discussed in Section in 8.2.1, the hierarchy of error gravity can be established and emphasis

can be laid on errors that constitute most to the intelligibility problems: eg

1. The teacher can concentrate on the incorrect articulation of monosyllabic words, the mispronunciation of which often affects intelligibility;
2. It is easier for the teacher to draw students' attention to one particular phoneme which they have difficulty in producing or identifying or both, such as the distinctions between the consonant phonemes, /θ/, /t/ and /d/, as in 'thin', 'tin' and 'din'; between /θ/, /d/ and /v/ as in 'than', 'ban' and 'van', or 'bother' and 'border'.
3. Priority can be given to training problem phonemes which caused more intelligibility problems for native-speakers than those which did not. eg
 - (i) It is more essential to stress the distinctions between the consonant phonemes /r/, /l/ and /d/ than between the consonant clusters /nd/ and /nt/, as in 'rent', 'lent' and 'dent', rather than 'lend' and 'lent' because mispronunciation of the consonant phonemes generally affected intelligibility whereas mispronunciation of the consonant clusters in the final positions did not.
 - (ii) It is more essential to stress the distinctions between the vowel phonemes /i:/ and /I/ than between /I/ and /v/, as in 'feet' and 'fit' rather than 'fit' and 'foot' because shortening of vowels often affected intelligibility, especially in monosyllabic words and students did not have difficulty in differentiating /I/ and /v/.
 - (iii) It is more essential to stress the distinctions between the vowel phonemes /e/ and /æ/ than between /ʌ/ and /æ/, as in 'pen' and 'pan' rather than 'pun' and 'pan' because students had difficulty differentiating /e/ and /æ/ but not /ʌ/ and /æ/.
 - (iv) It is more essential to stress the distinctions between the consonant /d/ and consonant cluster /dl/

than between the consonant /s/ and consonant cluster /st/, as in 'padding' and 'paddling' rather than 'lease' and 'least' because elision of consonant phonemes generally affected intelligibility whereas reduction of consonant clusters in final positions did not.

- (v) Moreover, it is not absolutely necessary to demonstrate the distinctions between the clear and dark /l/, as in 'leaf' and 'feel' as mispronunciation of /l/ normally did not affect intelligibility. However, it is necessary to demonstrate the 'existence' of /l/ as in 'salt' which is usually elided in students' speech and affects intelligibility. This can be done, for instance, by demonstrating the differences between 'sort' and 'salt'.
- (b) The method makes it easier for the teacher to teach students phonetic symbols. The system can be simplified by teaching only selected parts ie the symbols for those sounds which causes special difficulty in production and identification. Once students have learned to recognize the relevant symbols, they can always look up in dictionaries the words with which they have difficulty or cannot guess how to pronounce.
- (c) As Acton (1984: 76) points out, fossilized learners generally find it necessary to do some type of conscious monitoring in order to be able to ultimately effect change in everyday conversation. Phonemic distinction training is a kind of accuracy work (See S.8.2.4) which involves the teacher's constant monitoring to ensure accuracy.

In any kind of pronunciation exercise, a suitable model must be provided. The teacher is usually the ideal model if he thinks he is capable of carrying out the task. Otherwise, taped materials produced by native RP speakers will be an advantage. It will be profitable for students to go through a session of ear-training practice before articulation practice because faulty perception may lead to faulty articulation. This ear-training practice is followed by

articulation practice and, if necessary, accompanied by demonstration, explanation of how the sounds are articulated or visual aids etc. This practice of sounds in isolation should be followed immediately by the use of the same words in contexts such as in connected speech. Such contexts should involve humour and fun: the absurdity of meaning distortions through mispronunciations should be exploited, eg 'She's a pig girl' is very different from 'She's a big girl', and is pictorially easy to represent. Moreover, sounds taught should be systematically and constantly reviewed. This approach may help to remove or disprove the assertion that students tend to revert to their fossilized pronunciation when they are involved in a freer type of activity where the attention is focused on aspects of the language other than pronunciation.

Other Recommended Methods

It is generally felt that too much drilling for segmental accuracy may result in an adverse effect as the process of drilling may become a routine, meaningless practice. Hence, intensive drilling may be suitable in the beginning stage of the Spoken English course, other techniques have to be taken into consideration in the latter part of the course. Stevick (1978: 148) suggests a 'non-evaluative' technique which, I think,, can be used occasionally in the Malaysian context:

It is the student, not the teacher, who speaks first, and regardless of the accuracy of the students' pronunciation, the teacher gives the same word or phrase correctly, using a tone of voice that conveys interest and support, but which does not say 'right' or 'wrong'. The student, in turn, may or may not repeat after the teacher. In this informative but non-evaluative atmosphere, students pick up most of what they need to know.... whatever information the students do not pick up in this way is then provided from time to time by the teacher, in brief, matter-of-fact statements addressed to no one in particular.

When pronunciation is taught in this way, information from articulatory phonetics is seldom needed, but the teacher can still provide it when and where necessary.

Among the seven general features of a method, ie conversational control, monitoring strategies, non-verbal correlates of pronunciation, dictionary use, oral reading, informant use and integration (of pronunciation change), devised by Acton (1984) which are tailored to the needs of learners with highly fossilized pronunciation, one which is worth mentioning are the monitoring strategies, 'post-hoc monitoring' and 'kinesthetic monitoring'. The former refers to a strategy in which 'learners are taught to scan their speech after the fact, suppressing the urge to monitor sounds and structures, consciously, as they speak them.' This technique, as Acton claims, helps learners to 'recall or notice mispronunciation or other "problems" without the affective consequences (ie being anxious or overconcerned with errors while speaking)'. The latter refers to a strategy that involves teaching learners to monitor certain aspects of their speech based on the correct 'feel' of the target sound, consciously ignoring the auditory input. This, Acton believes is based on the principle that 'visual and kinesthetic modalities seem more accessible and "cooperative" in many instances than perception for fossilized learners.'

Furthermore, another technique which seems feasible is suggested by Leahy (1980) who, after analyzing the pronunciation patterns of four language groups ie Arabic, Persian, Japanese and Spanish, believes that there is a pattern to the kinds of errors that students make when trying to produce consonant phonemes and the pattern is definable in terms of distinctive features ie features of place, manner and voicing. Moreover, he believes that the use of these distinctive features can be used not only to discover the sounds in error, but also to design a workable system from which the problem in pronunciation can be approached. By the same token, once the distinctive features of the pronunciation pattern of Malaysian students are identified, it will be easier for the teacher to work out a system which can help to overcome their pronunciation problems.

8.3.2.4 Teaching the Production of Suprasegmental Accuracy

As far as suprasegmental 'errors' are concerned, it was found that apart from errors in word stress and tone grouping, other aspects did not, on the whole, seem to affect intelligibility. (Chapter Four) Hence, accuracy work for improving pronunciation other than segmental errors should be focused on errors in word stress and tone grouping.

(1) Word stress exercises

As was pointed out in Chapter Four, Section 4.5.2, English has a 'free' or 'movable' stress pattern ie stress may fall on any syllable in a word. It is, therefore, not possible to lay 'fixed' rules on word stress patterns. However, general remarks on stress patterns in English should be given to students. Moreover, the position of stress within a word needs to be learned as part of the pronunciation of that word. Students should also be taught that word stress may be (1) phonemic (eg in the meaning difference between 'present' ['prezənt] as a noun or adjective, and 'present' [prɪzənt] as a verb); (2) nonphonemic (in which case, there is no meaning significance. eg 'under' [ʌndə] and 'often' [ɒfən] always have stress on the first syllable, whereas 'again' [ə'geɪn] and 'today' [tə'deɪ] always have stress on the second syllable). Explanation should be followed by verbal practice with the teacher's monitoring and constant review is necessary. Imitation of recorded materials produced by native RP speakers will reinforce the learning process.

(ii) Tone group exercises

Accuracy-based exercises on tone grouping may involve students' reading aloud of dialogues or news clips etc especially those with longer utterances or sentences. Correct tone grouping is usually signalled through pitch change and often pauses. Reading aloud is actually a useful exercise since the structure has to be signalled by tone grouping as in such classic examples as: John said, 'Mary is coming' versus 'John', said Mary 'is coming'. Students' errors can be pointed out and discussed, for instance, in the light of grammatical structures. eg a

tone group corresponds to 'a clause, including simple sentences, main clauses, coordinate clauses and some subordinate clauses'. (See Chapter Four, S.4.5.5.3) It may also involve students in free conversation, with the teacher pointing out errors after the process of conversation. Besides, listening to recorded conversations by native speakers will also enhance the skill in detecting tone group divisions.

(iii) Miscellaneous exercises

The sound system of English is made up of not only individual sounds or phonemes, but also liaison between these sounds ie stress, rhythm and intonation, all of which are closely inter related. These elements constitute general fluency in speech. General remarks on the interrelationship between these elements may be dealt with in an incidental fashion, for instance, when students are listening to a recorded conversation. If necessary, suitable models should be provided for imitation. Texts with accompanying tapes can be of great help. (eg the series of books and recordings, entitled 'Elements of Pronunciation', including 'Weak Forms', 'Clusters', 'Stress Time', 'Link Up' and 'Contractions' by Colin Mortimer, provide a great many exercises on various aspects of pronunciation.) Among these, the area that needs special attention may be the use of 'weak' forms for there is a high irritant factor for native speakers even if it does not actually lead to breakdown of intelligibility.

Two more important points need to be made about teaching pronunciation: (a) it should be little and often; (b) it should involve humour because demonstrating the absurdity of mispronunciation is a powerful impulsion to get it right.

Finally, there are many guides to teaching pronunciation, with helpful suggestions about types of drills, lists of minimal pairs, identification of problem areas for particular language groups, useful and detailed articulatory descriptions, suggestions on presentation of materials etc eg Brown and Yule (1983 (a)), Haycraft (1971), Baker (1971), Byrne (1976), Byrne and Walsh (1973), Tench (1981). Perhaps, it should be left to the

teacher's own discretion to select and provide supplementary material which can benefit his particular groups of students. Though little is known about which specific instructional practice can contribute to L2 phonological development significantly, there is some evidence that training and drilling can produce positive effects on pronunciation in classroom settings. Whether or not the positive effects can carry beyond the classroom to real life situations is yet to be investigated.

8.3.3 The Teaching of Syntax in the Malaysian Spoken English Course

8.3.3.1 Formal or Informal Instruction

As was mentioned in Section 8.2.3, the Spoken English course is based on a communicative syllabus with objectives stated primarily in terms of communicative functions rather than linguistic terms. In other words, what is aimed at is teaching English as an instrument of communication and not just as the embodiment of a formal system. This does not, however, imply that the formal properties of English should be ignored altogether. Without adequate knowledge of the grammatical system of a language, an L2 learner will find it difficult to communicate. Wilkins (1976: 66), for instance, pays considerable attention to grammar in his notional syllabuses:

It is taken here to be almost axiomatic that the acquisition of the grammatical system of a language remains a most important element in language learning. The grammar is the means through which linguistic creativity is ultimately achieved and an inadequate knowledge of the grammar would lead to a serious limitation on the capacity for communication. ... We do not express language function in isolation.

... What we can express through language still depends on, among other things, how far we have mastered the grammatical rules that underlie the production of utterances.

The Survey (S.8.2.2) also indicates that Malaysian students felt that they needed to improve their grammar in order to be more proficient in spoken English. Hence, the formal properties of English should play a substantial role in the curriculum. Moreover, since Malaysian university students have studied English for eleven or twelve years in their primary and secondary

education, they have 'learned' nearly all the grammatical structures of English although most of them have not mastered them all. Teaching the whole grammatical system again would be unnecessary. However, remedial teaching of grammar especially on structures which give students most problems should be dealt with informally, in the sense that no specific time will be allocated for grammar teaching but it is taught when the need arises or when it is part of the component of a teaching unit.

(See also S.8.3.3.2 below)

8.3.3.2 Pedagogic Grammar versus Linguistic Grammar

In a traditional language syllabus, grammar is neatly organized into conventional formal categories. eg verbs, tense., nouns etc. The realization of the importance of language use (S.8.2.2) in language teaching has helped educators to reorganize the information in grammar to meet the learner's needs. These two approaches form the crucial basis of 'linguistic' and 'pedagogic' grammar. As Allen and Widdowson (1974: 67) put it:

A linguistic grammar is concerned with a specification of the formal properties of a language, while the purpose of a pedagogic grammar is to help a learner acquire a practical mastery of a language.

For Rivers (1983: 31), a linguistic grammar is 'an account of competence (the knowledge of the language system that a native-speaker has acquired) expressed in terms of an abstract model' and it can give teachers 'insight into language structure and clarify various aspects of the subject matter, ... but does not provide any guidance as to how a student can learn to communicate in a second language.' On the other hand, a pedagogic grammar decides 'the most

appropriate ways of arranging and presenting materials to the students in the light of what the linguistic grammar has established about the subject matter.'

It thus follows that the insights incorporated into a pedagogic grammar are drawn from a number of linguistic models and the teaching materials are selected from any of these models. The main criteria for the choice are pedagogical suitability and what will enhance communicative competence.

Since Malaysian university students have undergone extensive exposure to grammatical structures during their school days, there is no need to provide them with a detailed review of grammar, item by item, such as a 'linguistic grammar' would focus on. On the other hand, a 'pedagogic grammar', which is eclectic ie not following any particular linguistic model, but using parts of many different ones and focusing on the aspects of grammar for communicative competence, will prove more profitable to the students.

8.3.3.3 Selection and Sequencing of Grammatical Structures

As was mentioned in Section 8.2.3, selection of grammatical structure is often constrained by functional choices and selection of grammatical situation within the function to be expressed will depend on students' linguistic-cultural needs, the complexity of the grammatical items, the knowledge students already have and notions which will clarify the structure. For instance, in teaching students how to make requests, it is not necessary to discuss at length the following structures which the students are already familiar with eg

Come here, please.

Will you pass the sugar, please?

However, indirect ways of making a polite request, eg making a statement about one's own wishes and the use of modal auxiliary 'would' to denote politeness as suggested by Leech and Svartvik (1975:147) will increase students' range of options: eg

I wouldn't mind a drink, if you have one.

I wonder if you would kindly send us some information about your English courses?

Would you be kind enough to switch the light on?

Selection may also depend on which syntactic errors students actually make, in particular, those derived from students' spontaneous speech. The findings of the present study indicate that this is one of the aspects that remedial teaching could focus on as some of the errors caused serious intelligibility problems for native speakers of English.

8.3.3.4 Remedial Teaching on Syntactic Errors that Affected Intelligibility

The notion of 'correctness' in spoken language has been discussed in Section 8.2.2. As far as grammatical structure is concerned, we tended to resort to grammar books for judgement of 'correct' or 'incorrect' forms of language, which usually reflect the author's subjective point of view. However, we now tend not to believe that a certain structure is 'correct' because a grammar book says so. Rather, we tend to believe that a language is what people say and not what someone thinks they ought to say. This, however, does not necessarily mean that whatever people say is, in every circumstance, correct. This is particularly true in the case of L2 learners.

It was found in the present study that grammatically error-free utterances normally did not cause any intelligibility problems and 'correct' structures, ie those which are the same as native speakers', might not be necessary for intelligibility, (See Chapter Seven, S. 7.4.2), but 'fluent' and 'acceptable' forms of language ie utterances with minor grammatical errors or with structures which were not too deviant from those of standard British English, were essential for intelligibility.

The syntactic error-types 1 to 18 discussed in Chapter Five were common errors in Malaysian speakers' spontaneous speech. Strategies as to how to deal with these errors, especially those which affected intelligibility most, should be carefully devised.

Let us begin with error type 18 ie utterances with incoherent elements. This error type does not only relate to errors in structure, but also elements of fluency.

Mahl's (1956) study on vocal hesitation phenomena which share most of the 'incoherent elements' in error type 18, has led to the view that speech disturbances that occur in spontaneous speech fall into two distinct categories: The first category, the 'ah' phenomena, which include such expressions as 'ah', 'er', 'um' etc appear to be related to the uncertainty that accompanies the encoding of linguistic units. The second category, the 'non-ah' phenomena, which include such items as sentence changes, repetition, stutter, omission, sentence incompleteness, tongue slip, incoherent sounds and the like, seem to be positively correlated with a speaker's level of anxiety.

Moreover, Voss (1979) correlates perceptual problems of nonnative speakers of English with hesitation phenomena in the spontaneous speech of native speakers. This correlation was arrived at by asking nonnative speakers to transcribe a stretch of the native speakers' speech. He uses Maclay and Osgood's (1959: 24) categories of hesitation phenomena in spontaneous English speech in his analysis, viz (i) repeats, including all semantically non-significant repetitions; (ii) false starts, including incomplete or self-interrupted utterances, which can either be retraced ie corrected or left untraced; (iii) filled pauses, including all occurrences of hesitation devices such as 'ah', 'er', 'um' etc; (iv) unfilled pauses, which are characterized by 'silence of unusual length' or 'non-phonemic lengthening of phonemes'. It was found that nearly one-third of all perception errors can be correlated with hesitation phenomena (excluding unfilled pauses). Misunderstandings are due to either misinterpreting hesitation phenomena as (parts of) words or to misinterpreting (parts of) words as hesitation not to be recorded in writing. The results suggest that hesitation presents a major perception difficulty for the nonnative speaker confronted with spontaneous speech.

Hence, there is some evidence that it is difficult for nonnative speakers to decode native speakers' utterances which have hesitation phenomena in them and, by the same token, it is also difficult for native speakers to decode nonnative speakers' utterances with similar phenomena, as was discovered in the present study.

It may be true that as far as native speakers are concerned, hesitation and pauses do not necessarily indicate a breakdown of fluency as it is claimed to be a common feature in spontaneous speech. However, in terms of nonnative speakers, apart from the speakers' level of anxiety and uncertainty as was found by Mahl, it is quite evident that the phenomena are mainly due to lack of fluency in speech which, in turn, is mainly due to problems with certain grammatical structures. Tench (1981: 61) shares this view:

Having to work out correct grammatical forms in the middle of utterances disturbs fluency, as does searching in the mind for the right word.

To deal with this problem, what the teacher should do is, I believe, to involve students in graduated fluency activities, beginning with sketches or scripts, dramatization of jokes etc and going on to role play based on cue cards and later setting up free conversation as frequently as possible to build up their confidence in speaking by not interrupting them, no matter how many grammatical errors they make. The flow of conversation among students will gradually help them to develop the skill^{of} fluency. Norrish (1983: 51) voices a similar opinion:

Fluency in speech can only come about through the opportunity to use the language while not having to worry unduly over the form in which the message is transmitted; in other words, it can only come about when students feel sufficiently confident in, firstly, their ability to use the language they are learning for exchanging information and secondly, their teacher's wish to stand aside and allow them to find their own way.

Other Error Types

There has been controversy over whether deviant forms in the inter-language (ie interim grammar of L2 learners, Selinker, 1972) of L2

learners were the result of interference or negative transfer (4) from their L1, or were, in fact, developmental errors of the same type as those that appear in the interim grammar of children learning the first language. Empirical studies have, however, revealed that most of the interlanguage errors appear to be natural development phenomena in second language learning (Dulay and Burt, 1974; White 1977, Scott and Tucker, 1974), and learners sometimes make grammatical errors which they would not have made if they had used the same rules as those in their L1 (Richards, 1971).

Furthermore Taylor (1974) and Richards (1974) claim that syntactic errors made by L2 learners are due to the strategies of syntactic overgeneralization which results in grammatical simplification and redundancy reduction. (See also Chapter One, S.1.5) Hence, L2 learners may make both 'transfer' and 'generalization' errors in their speech. Taylor (1975: 394) draws this conclusion from his findings:

As a learner's proficiency increases, he will rely less frequently on his native language and on the transfer strategy, and more frequently on what he already knows about the target language and on the overgeneralization strategy. As proficiency increases, reliance on transfer decreases and reliance on overgeneralization increases.

The findings of the present study, however, show that, on the whole, most of the errors in error types 1 to 14 can be regarded as 'overgeneralization' errors and most of the errors in error types 15, 16 and 17 can be regarded as 'transfer' errors. The overall structure of some utterances with all these errors, however, indicates a negative transfer from the subjects' L1. eg

(a) Int. Four, Utt. 6 (Chinese)

Sometimes ^{E.T.6} very difficult la because some books
 yiou shi [^] hen nan la ying wei yiou xie shu

E.T.16 E.T.10
 ah... got fews only.
 yiou ji ben ba le

(classifier
 for books)

(Sometimes it is very
 difficult because there
 are only a few copies
 of some books.)

The overall structure of the utterance is, apparently, a direct translation from the subjects L1, Chinese. A careful analysis of the three error types, 6, 16 and 10, however, reveals that they are 'overgeneralization' errors.

(b) Int. Nine, Utt.6 (Chinese)

Around	like	that	(Around that)
da gai	xiang	na yang	

Error type: 16

It is a 'transfer' error.

Remedial Teaching Strategies

Research on error correction (Plann, 1977; Cohen and Robbins, 1976) reveals that neither correction techniques nor drilling can improve the quality of students' speech much. Thus, even if the teacher focuses on the interlanguage errors that students make, correction procedures or drilling are not likely to lead to much change in students' verbal performance. Other researchers (eg White, 1977) believe that many of the errors in syntax are developmental and they will disappear with time. However, as was stated in Section 8.2.4.2, the degree of achievement in any experiment depends on the experimental design, the techniques and materials used. Moreover, if students' errors are always left unchecked, hoping that they will 'disappear' with time, there will be no chance for students like those in Malaysia to improve their syntax through eradicating their own errors with time as they will not have the time (ie only fifty-six contact hours for the whole course) to develop such ability. Thus, some kind of remedial teaching has to be devised.

In a multiracial classroom in Malaysia, even if the source of students' errors can be traced back to students' L1, the correcting techniques and drilling suggested by contrastive analysis (eg comparing and contrasting L1 and L2 structures) will not be feasible or practical because students have different L1s. A remedial approach which involves 'review', 'contrast' and 're-review' suggested by Taylor (1975) may, to some extent, prove effective.

As Taylor claims, the 'remedial approach' is not 'a spur of the moment' kind of technique but is designed to 'reteach problem structures'.

The first step of the remedial approach involves a 'review' of the problem syntax which has been incompletely or improperly learned. Using the example of error type 7, ie Omission of subject, the teacher should engage in a thorough re-teaching of the function of 'Subject' in a sentence. It is entirely possible that students know that a sentence should consist of a subject and a predicate. However, they (Chinese students) tend to leave out the subject 'I' in their speech. eg

'Then feel very ashamed.' (Int. Three, Utt. 12)

'Because already in university, then cannot speak English very well.' (Int. Three, Utt.13)

'Most of the time go to "tanjung".' (Int. Nine, Utt.14)

This is a 'transfer' error. In spoken Chinese, when the speaker wishes to direct the hearer's attention to what he does rather than to him, who is doing it, he tends to leave out the subject 'I'.

The teacher may then produce numerous examples of utterances with the subject 'I' and stress on the word 'I' so that it stands out in the utterances. It may then be followed by the second step, 'contrast', not in the sense of contrasting L1 and L2 structures (for reasons given above), but 'contrast' within the target language ie English. It is generally not enough to recite the 'rules' to students as they have learned them and, in this case, telling them what a first person, second person and third person are, but a 'contrast' between them will bring out the differences and the ambiguity of leaving out the 'subject'. eg

Then I feel very ashamed because I failed my exam.

Then feel very ashamed because I failed my exam. (ambiguous)

(Note that the most likely interpretation of a subjectless sentence like this is that it is an imperative, something like:

You should feel ashamed because I failed my exam .)

Then he feels very ashamed because he failed his exam.

Then feel very ashamed because he failed his exam. (ambiguous)

This should be followed by drills and exercises. Wherever possible, repetition drills or mechanical substitution drills should be avoided. Exercises should be provided in a meaningful way ie they should be

designed in such a way that students must think about what they are doing. To achieve this, exercises should be conversational in an attempt to help students make the transition from 'intellectual drills' to communication without the loss of syntactic accuracy. eg

The teacher may ask a student to describe to the class verbally his daily life. In doing so, the subject 'I' will have to be brought in very often. In cases where the student leaves it out accidentally, the teacher will stop him immediately and ask, 'Who are you talking about?' etc. Alternatively, the teacher can ask students to tell each other about their daily life. In a word, there are numerous possibilities to deal with the problem with similar exercises.

The last step is 're-review'. This is the step that should be taken if similar errors continue to appear at a later time. This step should not be as intensive as the first, but should be designed more as a 'reminder' to students. Periodic review, in fact, can refresh students' memory on the syntax which was not adequately and appropriately learned.

This 'remedial approach' can be used to deal with all error types 1 to 17. (Except E.T. 18, which is not purely syntactic and has been dealt with separately). As for error types 15, 16 and 17 which normally caused intelligibility problems for native speakers, more varied exercises should be devised. For instance, for word-order exercises (E.T. 17), students may be provided with strings of words in jumbled positions and their task is to rearrange them in the correct order so that they form sensible sentences or utterances. The teacher may produce orally utterances with wrong word order and the students are asked to detect the errors and rearrange them in the correct order. With regard to error type 15 ie utterances with phrases that need restructuring and error type 16 ie utterances with unEnglish or non-standard expressions, remedial exercises can be 'contrastive' in the sense that utterances with unEnglish expressions and phrases that need restructuring are contrasted with those using standard English and the students' task is to decide

which ones are standard English and explain their choice. These kinds of exercise can be extended by using taped or video-taped free conversations of students from other classes (as it is always easier to detect others' errors) and students are asked to detect and correct as many errors as they can.

8.3.4 The Teaching of Lexis in the Malaysian Spoken English Course

8.3.4.1 Selection of Lexical Items for Teaching Purposes

It is generally agreed that while the phonological and syntactic systems are closed, lexis forms a potentially open set of items, with new words being introduced when and where the need arises. It is thus impossible to teach lexis without some measure of selection. Frequency was once thought to be the most important criterion. But it has become apparent that frequency lists cannot be taken as a yardstick for all teaching purposes as the most frequently used words are found to be those students already know. They include function words such as articles, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and some common content words such as 'play', 'do'. Apart from these lexical items, many nouns that learners need in their speech are not necessarily high-frequency items, yet they are the ones that have to be used in specific situations. Hence, selection of lexical items should be based on factors other than pure frequency count. Brumfit (1984: 97-98), for instance, deliberately omits 'lexical specification' in his 'model for content specification' of communicative curriculum because he claims:

Lexical choices, if they are to be principled, will arise out of the other categories. Morphological, syntactic and notional criteria, as well as situational, functional, and content criteria, will always have a major effect on the selection of lexis. In fact it is impossible to conceive of a selection of lexical items which is based on criteria that have no explicit interaction either with meaning, form, or function—unless we imagine a random working through either a dictionary or a thesaurus.

and hence, 'the lexicon can be regarded as potentially always present, to be called upon.....whenever there is a need in terms of one of the other items.'

Wilkins (1976: 76), too, argues on the same lines: 'In general, the categories of communicative function do not so much demand a specific lexical content as operate on a lexicon determined by other factors .' He refers one of the 'factors' to 'the situation of language use'.

A function is only realized in a specific context and indeed would only be taught in a specific context. The context may well be a situational context and, in that case, the lexical content taught will be that which is appropriate to the situation.

For instance, in the realization of a particular function such as 'disapproval', the category 'blame' is chosen as the situation in which the function takes place. Apart from using the lexeme 'blame' in various utterances such as;

I blame John.

You are to blame.

I put the blame on the doctor.

there are other ways of laying the blame explicitly with the use of other related lexical items. eg

It's your fault.

You have no excuse.

It was { on account of
the result of your negligence.
because of

That was completely unjustified.

Your behaviour is quite { reprehensible.
 indefensible.
 inexcusable.
 unpardonable. (P.46)

The new words are thus absorbed into the organizational structure and become usable in meaningful contexts.

As far as Malaysian students are concerned, the teacher should perhaps check whether students are familiar with the two thousand 'minimum adequate lexis' in West's GSE (1936) list before going on to develop networks like the one suggested by Wilkins.

8.3.4.2 Remedial Teaching on Wrong Lexical Choice in Utterances

It was found in the present study that wrong word choice affected intelligibility to some extent. One of the most important strategies in dealing with this is, perhaps, sheer exposure: students must hear and read a lot of text, so vocabulary development goes with reading and listening to a lot of English.

For repeated, high frequency lexical errors, correction strategy may involve improvising a monologue, dialogue etc in real classroom situations. Many Malaysian students often confuse lexical items such as 'bring', 'take', 'give' and 'fetch'. (See Chapter One, S.1.5.2) For instance, the teacher's verbal activity which involves the student's action will illustrate very clearly the differences between these words in the following example:

Teacher: Ali, bring me your book.

Ali (student): (Ali brings the book, walks to the teacher and gives it to him/her)

Teacher: Now, take this book and give it to Ahmad and come back here.

Ali : (Ali gives the book to Ahmad and returns)

Teacher: Well done. Now I'd like you to fetch the book from Ahmad.

Ali : (Ali goes to Ahmad and brings back the book to the teacher)

Teacher: Thanks.

Furthermore, it may be helpful to generate distinctive features grids like those used by Rudzka et al (1981) to help students conceptualize the differences between lexical items which action sequence like the one mentioned above cannot do.

8.3.5 Incorporating Sociocultural Knowledge into the Malaysian Spoken English Course

It was found in the present study that lack of shared sociocultural knowledge presented a great barrier to intelligibility for native speakers of English. It is thus apparent that in NS-NNS interactions, shared knowledge plays a very important role in intelligibility. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983: 26), for instance, felt that it is 'necessary to acquire enough knowledge about the culture of the target community to participate fully in a conversation at the beginning of a stay in a foreign country. Parts of messages in oral or written communication are misunderstood or given false values due to the fact that sociocultural experiences have not been shared by listener and speaker, or writer and reader.'

Since preparing students for further studies in English-speaking countries and attending international conferences are two of the important objectives of the Spoken English course, sociocultural knowledge of the target communities should be introduced to students.

Aspects of socioculture (eg customs, taboos, rituals etc) can be introduced incidentally as they arise in any teaching materials used. They can also be taught more explicitly through teaching aids such as feature and documentary films, television programmes, radio broadcasts, tapes, newspapers as well as dialogues in a variety of real-life situations. Furthermore, using pieces of contemporary literature can also help to develop sociocultural understanding. However, it has to be pointed out that the teacher's task is not teaching British (or American etc) life and institutions per se, but developing students' awareness of such knowledge.

Besides, to enable students to have a better understanding of the sociocultural knowledge of the target community, the teacher can compare and contrast some specific aspects of social practice of the target community and those of the students. For instance, in the event of breakdown of a car, the British will telephone the AA or RAC for assistance but the Malaysians will seek assistance from a mechanic .

To sum up , in any oral interaction, what we do is negotiate our meaning by interacting with and adjusting to the shared knowledge, and the linguistic ability of the person we are talking to. We need a certain understanding of the vocabulary and structure of the language before we can negotiate meaning well. We also have to learn how to conduct the process of negotiation if we are to be able to communicate effectively. An adequate sociocultural knowledge of the person we are talking to will facilitate the whole process.

In this chapter, I have made some observations and recommendations on the teaching of spoken English in the Malaysian context in the light of the intelligibility problems discussed in Chapters Four to Seven. Based on all the findings, a final word will be said on the intelligibility of the varieties of ME and the applicability of the findings in the next and concluding chapter.

Notes

(1) It is believed that the production difficulty and reception difficulty of certain English phonemes arise mainly from L1 interference of the students. eg

(a) The problems over vowel discrimination probably arise because

(i) Malay phonemes only consist of six vowels ie i, e, ē, a, u, o and ə; (Asmah, 1983:84)

(ii) Tamil has a system of five vowel phonemes, each of which may occur with a co-vowel of length ie i:, i, e:, e, u:, u, o:, o, ə and a:; (Ramish, 1969:160)

(iii) Mandarin has two vowel phonemes ie e and ə and nine allophones; Hokkien has a set of six vowels ie i, e, a, u, o and ɔ; and although there are many varying analyses of the Cantonese vowel system, most seem to agree on the number of phonemes, if not on the distribution of allophones', ie i, e, ü, ö, ʌ, a, u, o and ɔ; (Ramish, 1969:217, 283, 253)

as opposed to the twelve vowels of English. In addition, the absence of /æ/ and /I/ in all the three main languages constituted discrimination difficulty between /æ/ and /e/, /I/ and /i/.

(b) The problems over diphthong identification and production probably arise because

(i) there are no diphthongs in Malay but five 'phoneme clusters' ie au, ua, ui, ai and oi; (Asmah:85)

(ii) although there are six diphthongs in Tamil ie ey, e:y, ay, a:y, o:y and a:v, the diphthongs in colloquial Tamil tend to monophthongization. Thus, they are sometimes treated as sequences of V + C; (Ramish:163)

(ii) there are nine diphthongs in Mandarin ie æI, au, eI, oʊ, Iɑ, Iɛ, ʋa, ʋə and Yɛ; (Dow, 1972: 67-72)

as opposed to the ten diphthongs in English. In addition, the 'apparent' non-existence of diphthongs in Malay and Tamil and the absence of /eI/ and /aʊ/ in Hokkien (they do exist in Mandarin and Cantonese) constituted some difficulty in discriminating between /eI/ and /e/ or /I/, and between /əʊ/ and /ɔ:/ or /o/.

(c) The problems over consonant cluster discrimination probably arise because

(i) the only native consonant clusters in Malay are those of the 'homorganic nasal + plosive' and 'velar nasal + s' type which

only occur in the medial position of a word . eg kampung (Malay village); langsung (direct). The loan words from English has, however, allowed consonant clusters to occur in the word-initial and word-final positions.eg kompleks (complex); psikologi (psychology). (Asmah:85-86)

- (ii) there are no consonant clusters in Tamil and those clusters which are present occur 'medially across syllable boundaries, or initially in loan words' and there are no clusters in word-final position. (Ramish:177)

- (iii) there are no consonant clusters in Chinese.

This explains why Malaysian speakers have difficulty in identifying and producing consonant clusters in English.

- (d) The problems over consonant discrimination probably arise because
 - (i) although there are twenty-three consonants in Malay (Asmah:84), thirty-six in Tamil (Ramish:149) and eighteen in Mandarin, seventeen in Hokkien and twenty in Cantonese (Ramish: 212, 278, 249), the absence of /θ/ and /ʒ/ in all the three main languages (except Tamil in which /ʒ/ exists), constituted difficulty in identifying and producing these phonemes.
 - (ii) The aspirated voiceless plosives /p, t, k/ exist in both Tamil and Chinese (ie Mandarin, Hokkien and Cantonese) but not in Malay (in which only unaspirated plosives exist). Many Malaysian speakers of English, including Chinese and Indian, failed to pronounce the aspirated voiceless plosives in word-initial positions. This could be an error of overgeneralization or an influence from Malay.

(For full investigation into the phonology of Malay, Chinese and Tamil and the influence of the speakers' L1 on English pronunciation, see Ramish, 1969)

- (2) Brumfit (1984: 52-57) makes a distinction between 'accuracy' and 'fluency' activities in a classroom situation: the former are aimed at 'conscious learning by students' in which students' focus is on form rather than on meaning, which can be presented through talk, textbook, cassette or overt presentation techniques, together with specific correction by the teacher of any aspect of language. The latter is aimed to 'develop a pattern of language interaction within the classroom which is as close as possible to that used by competent performers in the mother tongue in normal life', and can be presented in language activities ranging from informal small-group conversation or role play to recordings, broadcast and formal face-to-face interactions such as lectures and speeches, through which much natural language is manifested. Such language activities focus on meaning rather than on analytical formal elements.
- (3) Corder (1974: 24-25) makes a distinction between a 'mistake' and an 'error': He refers a 'mistake' to 'an error of performance' which is a non-systematic or inconsistent deviation, committed due to memory lapses, physical states such as tiredness and psychological conditions, such as strong emotion, or slips of the tongue. These characteristics are common even among L1 speakers. On the other hand, an 'error' refers to 'the systematic errors of the learner' from which linguists are able 'to reconstruct his knowledge of the language to date ie his transitional competence.' Thus, as 'mistakes' are of no significance in the process of language learning, it is not necessary for the teacher to correct them.
- (4) According to Contrastive Analysis (CA) hypothesis, the automatic 'transfer' of L1 structure to L2 performance is 'negative' when L2 and L1 structures differ, and 'positive' when L2 and L1 structures are the same; negative transfer would result in errors while positive transfer would result in correct construction.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the present study so far, some important conclusions can be arrived at.

9.1 ME, International Intelligibility and the Teaching and Learning of Spoken English

As was pointed out in Chapter One, Section 1.5.3, one of the main aims of the present study was to investigate to what extent the Second Variety of ME was intelligible to native speakers of English. It was also mentioned in the same Chapter, Section 1.5.1 that although it was difficult to draw a line between the two main varieties of ME, the data of the present study, in fact, manifested the features of both the varieties, with predominantly those of the Second Variety. It was found that about 37.5% the utterances in the oral interviews caused intelligibility problems for British listeners. (Chapter Three, Table 4.8) The degree of intelligibility may appear relatively high. One must, however, bear in mind that the recordings were listened to by very willing and attentive listeners who knew that their task was to interpret orally as far as possible what they had heard. The listening sessions appeared to be strenuous effort for most of the listeners. Thus, it is almost without doubt that this variety of English cannot function as a means of international communication for a wide range of purposes eg in international conferences, workshops, international trade dealings etc, where fluent and totally intelligible speech is expected. Tongue (1974: 21) rightly points out that 'the form and expressions of the substandard type (ie the Second Variety of ME) need to be corrected if the speaker wishes to speak English which is intelligible and respectable on an international scale.'

Furthermore, since this variety of English has not been clearly established (See Chapter One, S.1.6.3), if it is left unchecked, the danger of its drifting into a mutually unintelligible creolised form is great. When this happens, the international use of the variety for cross-cultural communication would be considerably impaired.

One of the strong arguments for advocating English as an international medium of communication is that it is the most widely used language in the world. This will only remain valid and practical if the variety learned remains intelligible internationally. It thus seems that to ensure mutual intelligibility, English in the world today should work in the direction of greater homogeneity. Mushrooming of unchecked local varieties of English may work in the opposite direction. Hence, my defence of using a native-speaker variety, and in the Malaysian context, RP, as a model of teaching is based on functional criteria: It is chosen not because of its 'correctness' or 'social status', but it is internationally intelligible, regardless of race and nationality. This, however, does not mean that competence equal to that of the native speaker is the primary goal in the learning of the English language, as Widdowson (1984:251) puts it:

....Even if learners fall short of competence, this is not, I think, an important failure. For they will have been engaged in learning through the exercise of their capacity for making meaning from the resources available in a new language. This, I would argue, is the essential creative process of language learning as language use. The extent to which it produces native speaker competence is of secondary and contingent concern.

On the other hand, the effort to achieve an 'acceptable international standard' should be the priority, as Brumfit (1984:136) claims:

The goal of the teaching process... for most students, will be an ability to do anything they need to do in the target language..... but in the form which will progress from being markedly nonnative towards an acceptable international standard. "An acceptable international standard" will involve being more or less indistinguishable from

native speakers in relevant writing tasks, ability to comprehend native and nonnative speakers, and ability to communicate, while still, like native speakers, remaining clearly marked for place of origin in speech.

It was also pointed out in Chapter One, Section 1.5.3, that the First Variety of ME was generally claimed to be internationally intelligible and, thus, the teaching and learning of this variety in the country should not be discouraged.

Unlike the findings of previous studies on the intelligibility of a specific variety of nonnative English, with intelligibility problems attributed mainly to segmental and suprasegmental errors, (See Chapter Two, S.2.5.3), it was found in the present study that while pronunciation differences, deviant syntactic structures and wrong lexical choice all contributed to intelligibility problems for British listeners, the major impediment to intelligibility, in fact, arose from lack of shared background or schematic knowledge. In other words, it was noted that intelligibility was not merely a matter of whether a speaker and a listener shared norms of the language code, but more crucially, a matter of understanding the norms of each other's social and cultural behaviour and, thus, general conformity to a common standard of English may not ensure intelligibility across cultures.

Hence, as far as the teaching and learning of spoken English in Malaysia is concerned, three important matters have to be taken into consideration: (1) Standard British English or RP should be chosen as a model for teaching purposes; (2) The First Variety of ME should be recognized and accepted; (3) There should be a greater concern for other aspects of communication behaviour than linguistic norms in isolation. In addition, for English to fulfil its functions as both a local and international medium of communication, Malaysian students should, perhaps, acknowledge and acquire both the First Variety of ME and a near native-speaker variety or at least an 'acceptable international standard English', and learn to make discriminating use of them as situations require. Such

recommendations will satisfy the requirement of spoken English in its international context within the control of local educational policy and practice. To achieve these purposes, we would expect a good teacher to adapt, enrich, improvise, rearrange, create and discard teaching materials to meet the specific needs of students.

9.2 Areas for Further Research

It is believed that the present study has paved the way for further research in related fields of study. Specific areas are clearly identifiable:

- (i) The relation between intelligibility problems, linguistic errors and discourse factors has been examined within one specific type of spoken discourse ie oral interviews. Such relations need to be further explored within other spoken language activities such as formal lectures, free conversation, debates, discussions etc, to see whether similar findings can be obtained.
- (ii) The intelligibility rating scale (Chapter Three, Table 3.3) used to measure error gravity in spoken English seems to be a valuable and reliable tool. It would be interesting to see whether the same rating scale can be employed to measure error gravity in other aspects of language skills, eg reading and writing, or for other varieties of nonnative English.
- (iii) The present study has shown that linguistic errors and nonlinguistic factors affected intelligibility for British native speakers. It is of immediate importance that similar research is carried out with native speakers other than the British, eg Americans or Australians as well as nonnative speakers outside the South-East Asia region, to find out whether similar linguistic errors and nonlinguistic factors would yield similar intelligibility problems.
- (iv) The present study has also revealed that lack of shared background or schematic knowledge constituted

major intelligibility problems for British native speakers. It would be worthwhile to investigate fully the role of sociocultural knowledge in NS-NNS communication on a larger scale. Such an investigation might also envisage important research to determine relations between the discourse strategies used by speakers of different cultures and intelligibility.

9.3 Applicability of Findings

Although it is hoped that the findings of the present study will have universal applicability, the Malaysian background has apparently strongly influenced both the findings and conclusions. Moreover, as the research was based on Malaysian university students' speech, the remedial teaching strategies recommended are only truly relevant to that level. It is, however, hoped that the findings will have a 'regional' applicability, ie in similar settings in neighbouring countries, especially Singapore. However, on the whole, the standard of English in Singapore is relatively higher than that in Malaysia because of its use of English in wider intra-national as well as international communicative functions. Thus, in Singapore, I would expect less necessity for the sort of remedial teaching suggested in Chapter Eight. Yet, I believe, the findings may still throw light on syllabus design and material production for similar courses in that country. It is also hoped that the findings may have some bearing on the teaching and learning of spoken English in countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, Indonesia and India where the speakers share many of the linguistic features of Malaysia ie in their Chinese, Bahasa Malaysia and Indian languages.

9.4 A Final Word on Intelligibility

It is believed that it is not only the task of the speaker to make himself understood, but also that of the listener to make some effort to understand the speaker. This process of negotiation is a common feature of speech between native speakers and becomes even more essential in NS-NNS communication. A positive, sympathetic attitude and a 'willing' ear are of quite crucial importance in achieving mutual intelligibility.

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APPENDIX A (1) Transcription of Oral Interviews in Orthography

INTERVIEW ONE

Subject One (S1) Chinese Interviewer One (I1)

- I1 You're from Ipoh. Do you live there all your life?
- S1 Ya. It seems...Ya, all my life.
- I1 Can you tell me something about Ipoh? What is Ipoh like? Describe to me Ipoh.
- S1 Ipoh ah, Ipoh is a town, not many tourist places to go la.
Only shopping complexes and er.....
- I1 If I was to visit there, is there anything interesting to see? Anything interesting for me to see?
- S1 Er..... some..... there are some places er..... like the
D.R. Park and the Perak er..... 'San Poh Tong' and then
swimming pools..... Kinta swimming pool and er.....
- I1 What is a Deer Park? What do you mean by Deer Park?
- S1 No. The D.R. Park. The D.R. is stand for the builder of the
park, Doctor Seenivasagam.
- I1 Oh, I see.
- S1 And got children playground and swimming pool inside la and gardens.
At time there was a zoo inside but they are close some la because
of lack of fund..... and 'padang' there, not many places to go la.
- I1 Have you ever been to Penang before?
- S1 Yes.
- I1 For what reason, for what purpose?
- S1 Visiting relatives.
- I1 Visiting relatives. So, what do you think of Penang?
- S1 Yes. Er.... I think I like Penang better than K.L. and er.....
- I1 Why's that?
- S1 Not so many people and er..... the air here are not so.... when
I in K.L., I feel the air around K.L. is so tense la. Every time
you go you feel so low walking in the street la. Not unlike K.L.
la, Penang is a pleasure and then..... has beaches to go.
- I1 Okay. Have you visited the beaches in Penang?
- S1 Yes. When I visiting my relatives.
- I1 What do you think of the beaches?
- S1 (Silent)
- I1 Do they seem dirty to you or are they well-kept?
- S1 So far I haven't see a beaches, any spot beaches la, so so la.

- I1 Okay. What about USM? How do you find USM so far?
- S1 (Silent)
- I1 Are you enjoying it or are there things you dislike?
- S1 Other than the Orientation Week, I enjoy it la.
- I1 What's wrong with the Orientation Week?
- S1 (laughs)..... The seniors are so..... they are so chil.....
fussy er..... asking all the things like that.
- I1 Do they..... Has there been any ragging?
- S1 Not, not really. But they just keep bothering us la. Asking
questions, silly questions.
- I1 Being stupid, being silly.
- S1 Yes.
- I1 So, what do you intend to do when you leave USM?
- S1 Oh, I haven't think of it.
- I1 You are doing what actually? Your major is.....?
- S1 I major..... I majoring Chemistry.
- I1 Chemistry. I see. So obviously your job will be something to do with Chemistry. Your job will be something to do with Chemistry?
- S1 I minor in Management I will minor in Management. So I
think I am going into the management field la.
- I1 Mhm. Alright. That's the end of the interview,

INTERVIEW TWO

Subject 2 (S2)

Chinese

Interviewer (I1)

- I1 Er..... What sort of things do you like about the campus? What sort of things to you enjoy?
- S2 Oh, I think I study much in library la, and for the games
..... a bit only la.
- I1 What about library facilities? Are they good?
- S2 Sir, you mean service?
- I1 Mhm. Services.
- S2 Very good.
- I1 What about the staff? Are they helpful?
- S2 Yes. Very helpful?
- I1 Mhm. Very helpful. Can you always find the book that you need?
- S2 Sometime very difficult la because some books ah.... got fews
only. Two or three books and er.... if because many
students need this book ah, so difficult to find la.

- I1 Mhm. I see. You don't play many sports?
- S2 Er..... What?
- I1 You don't play many sports in USM? You play anything.....er badminton or tennis?
- S2 Sport ah..... No.
- I1 Nothing. So what do you do for your free time, your leisure time?
- S2 So..... The most time I am in library because I find the English book very difficult.....I, I cannot study la. I must find the.....er..... dictionary{ a long time.
- I1 Mhm. I see.
Do you watch much TV?
- S2 Er..... I think..... Mon....Monday la. Sport, sport I watch it..... football and er..... some, some badminton.
- I1 But normally you don't watch very much.
- S2 No .
- I1 I see. That's the end of the interview.

INTERVIEW THREE

- Subject 3 (S3) Chinese Interviewer (I1)
- S3 You mean my village ah?
- I1 Mm. Can you describe it to me?
- S3 Er.... just a Malay village la. Very small. Er..... there is a river la. We have a river la. So most people ah, live beside the river.
- I1 Beside the river. What sort of things do they do? What are their jobs?
- S3 Jobs? Er..... mostly they are rubber tapper.
- I1 Rubber tappers.
- S3 Then, some of them are..... paddy..... er paddy.....
- I1 Paddy farmers?
- S3 Paddy, paddy farmers.
- I1 Mostly Chinese or Malays?
- S3 Er.... mostly Malay la. Then quite, only a few Chinese la.
- I1 Only a few. I see. Can you tell me why you'd like to take this course?
- S3 Because I am very poor in English la. Then feel very ashame la, Er..... because already in university, then cannot speak English very well. Not very well, also very poor la, and can

- cannot communicate with person la. And feel very ashamed.
- I1 Mm. Why do you think English is important for your future?
- S3 Er..... When I small..... I don't know the able to know English.
Now.... now... er... after secondary, feel..... what I see
and what I heard ah.... then I found English very important.
- I1 Very important. Okay, Good. Er.... What do you like about USM so far? You've been here for one or two weeks. What sort of things you like about USM?
- S3 Er..... I don't with, within this week ah.... within
this two week ah we mostly have programme , programme la.
So we, we haven't got er...
- I1 Seen much? You haven't done very much. Has there been any ragging?
- S3 No.
- I1 No ragging. Not too bad so far. Which 'Desa' are you living in?
- S3 I am in 'Desa Cahaya'.
- I1 'Desa Cahaya'. How many people in a room there?
- S3 Er..... four, four people.
- I1 So, quite cramped. But it's okay, the 'Desa'?
- S3 Okay.
- I1 That's the end of the interview.

INTERVIEW FOUR

Subject 4 (S4)

Chinese

Interviewer 1 (I1)

- S4 English is is important because er..... in Malaysia, there
are, they are people, they are a lot of people..... Er
their language, their spoken English, that means er.... if we
want to talk with them or communicate with them, we have to
use English or else.....
- I1 Difficult?
- S4 Difficult,
- I1 Okay. You're from Muar. Can you tell me something about Muar? Can you describe to me the town? I have never been there, so can you tell me something about it?
- S4 Muar ah. Muar actually is a small town. But Muar is quite
famous because Muar they got, they got a bridge ha. Er....
can, can said, can be, can said it very known in Malaysia la.
Er.... in Muar they they have also a er... what... a 'tanjung'

- Er..... that means er.... a place, a resort where people will spend their leisure times there and er.... Muar..... actually Muar is not a big town la but.....
- I1 Quite small. What's the population?
- S4 Population ah, I do not know, but.....
- I1 Bigger than Penang? Smaller than Penang?
- S4 No. Smaller. Much smaller than.....
- I1 Much smaller than Penang. Have you ever been to Penang before?
- S4 This is first time I have been.
- I1 First time. Have you seen any of the city or beaches here?
- S4 So far, none.
- I1 None. Okay. Which 'Desa' are you living in USM? Which 'Desa' are you living in?
- S4 What? 'Desa'?
- I1 You're living on campus?
- S4 No, no. I stay outside.
- I1 You're living outside.
- S4 I stay with some friends. And then home, home ah, at home ah..... it is horrible.
- I1 Which part of the town?
- S4 Here la. Here. 'Sungei Dua' la.
- I1 'Sungei Dua'. Okay. Four of you in one room?
- S4 'Or'.
- I1 How much do you pay for that?
- S4 Er..... 120. Actually we rent the two room la. But..... we make one room as sleeping room, sleeping room and one room as study room.
- I1 Oh, I see.
- S4 So, one room, two room. One, one of them we pay for it. We pay, we pay..... we rent the room for, we rent the room... 120 for one room and other we pay 135.
- I1 Alright. Good. Thanks for coming. That's the end of the interview.
-

INTERVIEW FIVE

Subject 5 (S5)

Malay

Interviewer 1 (I1)

I1 Did you study here?

S5 Ya.

I1 Oh, you studied here. What was your major?

S5 Er..... Development studies in Social Science.

I1 Then you came straight to Off-Campus.

S5 Ya.

I1 I see. Can you tell me something about your job in off-campus?

S5 Now..... so far..... Now I in charge the media production for the off-campus student like radio programme , video cassette. That's all. And for the first, first July I in charge the Foundation Science for government.

I1 Foundation Science?

S5 Ya.

I1 What is that actually?

S5 Something like 'matrikulasi'.

I1 Matriculation. So you have been working for USM for seven years now?

S5 No, no. Three years.

I1 For three years. I see. So you have always been in the Off-Campus Unit?

S5 Ya.

I1 I see. Okay. Can you tell me..... when you take this course, you will be auditing it, is it? Or you're taking the exams or....

S5 No. I think I like to attend the class. That's all.

I1 Can you tell me why you want to attend the class?

S5 Because I..... I think I am very poor in English, especially in spoken.

I1 Okay. But the official language of the country is 'Bahasa'.

S5 Ya.

I1 So, why is English important? Why do you think it's important for you to improve your English?

S5 Because in my future, I think I want to do my future study in my master. So I fail my TOEFL for last time.

I1 Oh, you failed your TOEFL last time. So you want to try again.

S5 Ya. So I want to try to improve my English.

- I1 So you are hoping to go to America to do your MA?
 S5 I think so. But next year, the Off-Campus send me to Vancouver of Canada for the course.....
 I1 For how long?
 S5 May be..... one, to six month.
 I1 For what sort of course?
 S5 Media, media production.
 I1 Media production.
 S5 For the Off-Campus.
 I1 For Off-Campus. Okay. I think that's enough.
-

INTERVIEW SIX

Subject 6 (S6)

Indian

Interviewer 1 (I1)

- S6 Some of them just.....
 I1 What sort of things do they do?
 S6 They ask where I come from. How many people in my family, and then..... they ask to see forms and then jokes.....
 I1 That sort of things you don't mind. It's okay with you?
 S6 Okay.
 I1 Which 'Desa' are you staying in?
 S6 'Desa Permai'. 357.
 I1 I see. How do you find the conditions there?
 S6 Until now, I have no problem. I feel er.... I am okay.
 I1 How many people are staying in a room there?
 S6 Er.... two people in one room lah.
 I1 How about the size of the room? How big is it?
 S6 Mm.... It's quiteokay lah. Quite big and comfortable for us.
 I1 Mm. Okay. You come from Kampar.
 S6 Ya.
 I1 Can you tell me something about Kampar?
 S6 Er.... Kampar is a small town which is located 34 miles from K.L. and nowadays Kampar is under developing area, and there are a lot of projects, housing projects and er.I think in a few years, we will have the factories over there.

- I1 Have you been seeing any TV3?
- S6 TV3?
- I1 Can you receive TV3?
- S6 Ya, In my area, can.
- I1 Do you watch it?
- S6 Yes.
- I1 What programmes do you like?
- S6 Er.... The Hotel and then some more.... Mag.... Magnum, and then one..... Knight Rider.
- I1 Mhm. What do you think about TV3 overall? What do you think about TV3?
- S6 It's okay. Er..... actually, er..... for Malaysian ah, for all must need another channel like TV3 because in the Channel 2 and 1, most the programmes er..... can say not very nice. But TV3 is okay.
- I1 Mhm. I see. Okay. Er.... when.... if you.... Do you watch much Channel 1 and Channel 2 before?
- S6 Channel.....
- I1 The RTM 1 and RTM 2?
- S6 Er...
- I1 Do you watch much of that before?
- S6 No.. Just only I spend two hours or one hours watching television.
- I1 You just choose certain programmes.
- S6 Ya.
- I1 What do you think' Some religious group has already said TV3 is bad. What do you think about that?
- S6 That is depend on er.... depend on the..... person. Er.... because if we don't, they don't like the Channel 3, that means they can change to Channel 2 or 1. We cannot comment the Channel 3 because Channel 3 is er.... is only purpose for commercial. So we cannot comment anything about that.
- I1 Okay. So, how do you find USM so far? Enjoying it?
- S6 Er.... I can't say like that. Still I feel nervous to contact seniors and most probably I take 2 or 1 month for.....
- I1 Settling down?
- S6 For finally settling down everything.
- I Okay. That's the end of the interview.

INTERVIEW SEVEN

Subect 7 (S7)

Malay

Interviewer 1 (I1)

I1 You're off-campus student?

S7 No, full-time.

I1 Are you sponsored by the Government?

S7 Yes. Sponsored by the Department.

I1 What is your Department actually?

S7 The MARA.

I1 Oh. MARA. I see. The executive office is at MARA.

S7 Yes.

I1 You are a teacher there?

S7 No. Administrative.

I1 Oh, administrative. I see. What... Can you describe to me the sort of work..... what work do you do? what is it called?

S7 Er..... (unintelligible).... function, and then the industrial relation, labour relation.

I1 Labour relations. Can you tell me why you want to do this course?

S7 Er..... I want to improve my spoken English. I want to be proficient because.....

I1 Okay. Why do you think it's important I mean the national language is 'Bahasa'. So why do you feel that English is important?

S7 Because from time to time, we will be sent to overseas for posting, you see, for MARA students affairs. So, since we will be meeting people from all walks of life and I think the, the medium of language will be in English, you see. So will make me more freely to mix you know with people and..... at the same time, I will be able to.... to explain to people in foreign countries about our country. Has to act more or less like a ambassador of Malaysia. Otherwise we will be handicap you see on our conversation with the foreign countries in the West.

I1 I see. How do you find USM so far? You have been here for one week now.

S7 Oh, yes.... But before that, I had been here for one month, 1980, under the sponsored by my Department, the programme of Institute Management under the Basic Management programme of course.

I1 So you're enjoying things so far?

S7 Yes.

I1 Thank you.

INTERVIEW EIGHT

Subject 8 (S8)

Indian

Interviewer 1 (I1) Interviewer 2
(I2)

- I1 What are you majoring in? Your major is.....
- S8 Mass Communication.
- I1 Mass Communications. What do you hope to do with your degree when you leave, when you graduate?
- S8 Mm....
- I1 What sort of jobs do you hope to get?
- S8 Any job in Mass Communication field.
- I1 In a private sector or in the government?
- S8 In both the sectors.
- I1 You don't mind. You're from K.L. You live there all your life?
- S8 Ya?
- I1 You live there all your life?
- S8 Ya.
- I1 I see. Have you been seeing any of TV3 recently?
- S8 Mm....
- I1 TV3.
- S8 Not much.
- I1 You haven't seen any?
- S8 I have seen but er.... not many programmes.
- I1 What programmes have you enjoyed?
- S8 Like sports.
- I1 Any other programmes in TV3 that you have enjoyed?
- S8 (Silent).
- I1 TV3 doesn't have much sports programmes, but are there any programmes that you enjoy?
- S8 TV programmes like Dynasty. But I haven't seen the full programme yet.
- I1 What about compared to RTM, what differences do you notice?
- S8 It's difference is in TV3 they are putting very interesting programmes, whereas in RTM most of them are local programmes.
- I2 Are you sure? Not absolutely, isn't it?
- S8 Not absolutely. Most of the programmes in RTM are local programmes.
- I1 Some group has just said that TV3 is not very good, shouldn't be shown. What do you think about that? What is your opinion?

- S8 (Silent)
- I1 Some groups in the country have expressed dissatisfaction with TV3. What do you think about that?
- S8 I think that TV3 programmes are really interesting and the majority of the population in Malaysia are interested in watching the TV3 programmes. That there are someone who commented that they would not have the chance to watch TV3 programmes. It shows that they are very interested, you see, in the TV 3 programmes.
- I1 You're living on the campus now?
- S8 Ya,
- I1 Which 'Desa' are you living in?
- S8 I am living in 'Desa Swasta' Block 10, Room number 3.
- I1 How many of you are sharing a room there?
- S8 Four of us, included me.
- I1 So, it is very crowded.
- S8 Yes. It is crowded and study time is.... I don't think that it is easy to study also.
- I1 Have you been to the library so far?
- S8 So far I haven't been to the library.
- I1 What about the Orientation Week? How did you find the Orientation Week?
- S8 So far the Orientation Week is so interesting. The seniors are quite, they are very friendly.
- I2 They haven't tried to bully you?
- S8 So far, no.
- I1 No ragging?
- S8 No ragging so far.
- I1 Okay. Thanks for coming.

INTERVIEW NINE

Subject 9 (S9)

Chinese

Interviewer 1 (I1)

- I1 Can I see your form? Thank you. Your name is Chua Teck Yong. You're from Muar?
- S9 Ya.
- I1 You live in Muar all your life?
- S9 What is it?

- I1 Have you lived in Muar all your life?
- S9 Ya.
- I1 Can you tell me something about Muar?
- S9 Muar.... I think Muar is the second biggest city in the Johore State and then the population is now, I think, two hundred thousand and consist of I think, 50% of Malay, 40% of Chinese, and then 10% is Indian, around like that. And then Muar..... Muar don't have much recreation.
- I1 Doesn't have much what?
- S9 Ah?
- I1 Doesn't have much what?
- S9 I think..... like recreation?
- I1 Not much recreation.
- S9 Ah.
- I1 So what do you do for enjoyment?
- S9 Er..... I think sometimes go to the cinema because Muar got five cinema , one or two is force to close up already, only 3 left. Most of the time go to 'tanjung'. 'Tanjung' I think, 'tanjung' is quite okay la.
- I1 What do you mean when you say 'tanjung'?
- S9 Ah?
- I1 What do you mean by 'tanjung'?
- S9 'Tanjung' ah, 'tanjung', the seaside.
- I1 Seaside.
- S9 Ah. We call it 'tanjung' la.
- I1 Mhm.
- S9 But the seaside you compare to the Penang one is nothing. I think Penang one is.....
-

INTERVIEW TEN

Subject 10 (S10) Malay Interviewer 1 (I1) Interviewer 3 (I3)

- S10 But then my home town is Kedah.
- I1 How long have you been in K.L.?
- S10 Er for last two years.
- I1 You like K.L.?
- S10 I think I don't like it. (laughs)

- I1 Why's that?
- S10 Because the.....I feel that the life there is a bit
er..... miserable to me as compared to Kedah because.....
I don't know, the people there, the life you know in town
areas as well if compared to often the..... rural people,
and then I cannot adjust myself, you know.
- I1 Mhm. You find the people different there?
- S10 Yes.
- I1 In what way are they different?
- S10 In their..... in their..... daily..... life and then.....
- I1 Can you tell me something specific?
- S10 And about the..... the traffic in K.L. also jam and when
you go to work, you have to wake up early in the morning.....
whereas compared to Kedah at 8, you can, or 7.30 you are
still at home.
- I1 Life is a bit slower.
- S10 A bit slower in Kedah if compared to K.L. Everything has to
rush in, is it?
- I1 What do you think of Penang so far? You have been in Penang how long? Two weeks?
- S10 Yes. Just two weeks.
- I1 Have you been to Penang before?
- S10 Er.... just come for a short while, shopping. That's all.
- I1 So what are your impressions of Penang so far?
- S10 Just the same as in Kedah. I think not so..... so much different.
- I1 Quite similar to Kedah.
- S10 Yes. Quite similar.
- I3 I notice you worked as a social welfare officer.
- S10 Yes.
- I3 Can you tell me about the job that you did for almost six years?
- S10 Yes. Previously I am doing just in the aid section, just
giving aids to the poor people, and then after that I am
doing the juvenile cases whereby dealing in courts ah helping
all the juvenile delinquency and then I am doing the prostitution
side also, helping those underage arrested by police when they
caught in hotels and so on.
- I3 So what help do you give to them?
- S10 Er.... just by.... to establish their moral and give counselling
to them, to rehabilitate themselves.

- I3 Is there a high success rate in rehabilitating these prostitutes?
- S10 Yes. I think so, because it's how... they way the....
I mean their participation ah in their family side as well
as the girl's side, and the way and then how we counsel the
girl. We must talk about religious things and so on and must
make full use of them.
- I3 Are many of them happily married and taken into the main stream of the society again?
- S10 Yes. Some of them but not all. Depend. There are some
cases whereby they went back to prostitution also because
they had been..... I mean they got better, easy income, you
know, whereas if they work and then they feel, they are so
lazy and then they have not enough education. So very
difficult for them to survive.
- I3 Do you think one way to solve this problem is to legalise the prostitution like they do in the western countries. In that way they can check the spread of disease?
- S10 Yes. I think so. But I mean..... you must have the
certificate, I mean to have meds, I mean, medical test you
know for those prostitutes.
- I1 What about morally? The moral question if you legalise prostitution? Isn't there a moral question? If you say it's okay, we legalize it, carry on.....
- S10 That one because I am not so deeply in....., I am not
so interested in, actually, prostitution work, you see.
Because when I went to K.L. I chose, I have chosen the
children section. I think children section is more interesting
rather than prostitution and so on. Because children section
you can help these people, you know, the abandoned child and
so on and then how you could bring up a child to be a proper
human being.
- I3 They are more helpless in a sense.
- S10 Yes. They are more helpless.
- I1 Mhm. I see. Okay. That's the end of the interview.

APPENDIX A (2) Utterance Number of the Units of Utterance in Oral Interviews

Interview One

<u>Utt. No.</u>	<u>Utterances</u>
1.	Ya. It seems... ya, all my life.
2.	Ipoh ah, Ipoh is a town...
3.	Not many tourist places to go la.
4.	Only shopping complexes and er...
5.	Er... Some... there are some place er... like the D.R. Park and the Perak er ...
6.	San Poh Tong and then swimming pools.... Kinta swimming pool and er...
7.	No, the D.R. Park. The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park, Doctor Seenivasagam la.
8.	And got children playground and swimming pool inside la and garden...
9.	At time there was a zoo inside, but they are close some la because of lack of fund.
10.	And 'padang' there, not many places to go la.
11.	Visiting relatives.
12.	Yes. Er.... I think I like Penang better than K.L. and er...
13.	Not so many people and er....
14.	The air here are not so....
15.	When I in K.L. I feel the air around K.L. is so tense la.
16.	Every time you go you feel so low walking in the street la.
17.	Not unlike K.L. la, Penang is a pleasure and then.... has beaches to go.
18.	Yes. When I visiting my relatives.
19.	So far I haven't see a beaches, any spot beaches la..... so so la.
20.	Other than the Orientation Week I enjoy it la.
21.	(laughs) The seniors are so.... they are so chil... fussy er... asking all the things like that.
22.	Not, not really. But they just keep bothering us la, asking questions, silly questions.
23.	Oh! I haven't think of it.
24.	I major.... I majoring Chemistry.
25.	I minor in Management I will minor in Management.
26.	So, I think I am going into the management field la.

INTERVIEW TWO

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	Oh! I think I study much in library la.
2.	And for the games er... a bit only la.
3.	Sir, you mean service?
4.	Very good.
5.	Yes. Very helpful.
6.	Sometimes very difficult la because some books ah.... got fews only.
7.	Two or three books and er.... if.... because many students need this book ah, so difficult to find la.
8.	Sports ah.... No.
9.	So... The most time I am in the library because I find the the English book very difficult.
10.	I, I cannot study la.
11.	I must find the er.... dictionary.... a long time.
12.	Er... I think.... Mon... Monday la.
13.	Sport, sport I watch it.... football and er.... some badminton.

INTERVIEW THREE

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	You mean my village ah?
2.	Er... Just a Malay village la. Very small.
3.	Er... There is a river la.
4.	We have a river la.
5.	So most people er... live beside the river.
6.	Jobs? Er.... Mostly they are rubber tapper.
7.	Then, some of them are... paddy er.... paddy....
8.	Paddy, paddy farmers.
9.	Er... Mostly Malay la.
10.	Then quite, only a few Chinese la.
11.	Because I am very poor in English la.
12.	Then feel very ashamed er...
13.	Because already in university, then cannot speak English very well.
14.	Not very well, also very poor la, and can cannot communicate with person la.
15.	And feel very ashamed.
16.	Er... When I small... I don't know the able to know English.
17.	Now, now er... After secondary, feel... what I see and what I heard er.... then I found English very important.
18.	Er... I don't.... with, within this week ah, within this two week ah... we mostly have programme, programme la.
19.	So, we we haven't got er.....
20.	I am in Desa Cahaya.
21.	Er... Four, four people.

INTERVIEW FOUR

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	English is, is important because er... in Malaysia, there are, they are people, they are a lot of people.....
2.	Er... their language, their spoken language... that means er... if we want to talk with them or communicate with them...
3.	We have to use English or else....
4.	Difficult.
5.	Muar ah, Muar actually is a small town.
6.	But Muar is quite famous because Muar they got, they got a bridge ha.
7.	Er... Can, can said, can be, can said it very known in Malaysia la.
8.	Er... In Muar, they, they have also a er... what.... a 'tanjung'....
9.	Er... That means er... a place, a resort where people will spend their leisure times there.
10.	And er... Muar, actually Muar is not a big town la but...
11.	Population I do not know but....
12.	No. Smaller. Much smaller than.....
13.	This is first time I have been.
14.	So far, none.
15.	What? 'Desa'?
16.	No, no. I stay outside.
17.	I stay with some friends.
18.	And then home home ah, at home ah, it is horrible.
19.	Here la, here. Sungei Dua la.
20.	Er... 120. Actually, we rent the two room la.
21.	But... we make one room as sleeping room, sleeping room and one room as study room.
22.	So, one room, two room... One, one of them we pay for it, we pay we pay...
23.	We rent the room for.... we rent the room.... 120 for one room and other we pay 135.

INTERVIEW FIVE

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	Er Development Studies in Social Science.
2.	Now... so far... now I in charge the media production for the off-campus student...
3.	Like radio programme, video cassette. That's all.
4.	And for the first, first July I in charge the Foundation Science for Government.
5.	Something like 'martrikulasi'.
6.	No, no. Three years.
7.	No. I think I like to attend the class. That's all.
8.	Because I.... I think I am very poor in English especially in spoken.
9.	Because in my future, I think I want to do my future study in my master.
10.	So I fail my TOEFL for last time.
11.	Ya, So I want to try to improve my English.
12.	I think so. But next year the off-campus send me to Vancouver of Canada for the course...
13.	May be.... one to six month.
14.	Media, media production... for the off-campus.

INTERVIEW SIX

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	Some of them just....
2.	They ask where I come from....
3.	How many people in my family....
4.	And then... they ask to see forms and then jokes.
5.	Desa Permai, 357.
6.	Until now, I have no problem.
7.	I feel er... I am okay.
8.	Er... Two people in one room lah.
9.	Mm... It's quite okay lah. Quite big and comfortable for us.
10.	Er... Kampar is a small town which is located 34 miles from K.L.
11.	And nowadays Kampar is under developing area.
12.	And there are a lot of projects, housing projects and....
13.	Er... I think in a few years, we will have the factories over there.
14.	TV3?
15.	Ya. In my area, can.
16.	Er... The Hotel and then some more... Mag... Magnum and then one... Knight Rider.
17.	It's okay. Er... Actually er...
18.	For Malaysians ah, for all must need another Channel like TV3...
19.	Because in the Channel 2 and 1, most the programmes er... can say not very nice.
20.	But TV3 is okay.
21.	No. Just only I spend two hours or one hours watching television.
22.	That is depend on er... depend on the.... person.
23.	Er... because if we don't, they don't like the Channel 3...
24.	That means they can change to Channel 2 or 1.
25.	We cannot comment the Channel 3 because Channel 3 is er... only purpose for commercial.
26.	So we cannot comment anything about that.
27.	Er... I can't say like that.
28.	Still I feel nervous to contact seniors and most probably I take two or one month for...
29.	For finally settling down everything.

INTERVIEW SEVEN

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	No, full time.
2.	Yes. Sponsored by the Department.
3.	The MARA.
4.	No. Administrative.
5.	Er... (untelligible)..... personnel function and then industrial relation, labour relations. (See N.B.)
6.	Er... I want to improve my spoken English.
7.	I want to be proficient... because...
8.	Because from time to time, we will be sent to overseas for posting, you see....
9.	In MARA student affairs...
10.	So, since we will be meeting people from all walks of life...
11.	And I think the medium of language will be English, you see....
12.	So will make me more freely to, you know, mix with people and....
13.	At the same time, I will be able to...
14.	To explain to people in foreign countries about our country.....
15.	Has to act more or less like a ambassador of Malaysia....
16.	Otherwise we will be handicap, you see, in our conversation with the foreign countries in the West.
17.	Oh, yes. But before that, I had been here for one month, 1980....
18.	Under the sponsored by my Department, the programme of Institute of Management.
19.	Under the Basic Management programme, of course.

(N.B. Utterance 5 was not counted in the units of utterance because it was partly untelligible)

INTERVIEW EIGHT

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	Mass Communication.
2.	Any job in Mass Communication field.
3.	In both sectors.
4.	Not much.
5.	I have seen but er... not many programmes.
6.	Like sports.
7.	TV programme like Dynasty,
8.	But I haven't seen the full programme yet.
9.	Its difference is in TV3 programmes they are putting very interesting programmes.
10.	Whereas in RTM most of them are local programmes.
11.	Not absolutely. Most of the programmes in RTM are local programmes.
12.	I think that the TV3 programmes are really interesting....
13.	And the majority of the population in Malaysia are interested in watching the TV3 programmes.
14.	That there are someone who commented that they could not have the chance to watch TV3 programmes.....
15.	It shows that they are very interested you see, in TV3 programmes.
16.	I am living in Desa Swasta, Block 10, Room number 3.
17.	Four of us, included me.
18.	Yes. It is crowded and study time is... I don't think that it is easy to study also.
19.	So far I haven't been to the library.
20.	So far the Orientation Week is so interesting.
21.	The seniors are quite, they are quite friendly.
22.	So far, no.
23.	No ragging so far.

INTERVIEW NINE

<u>Utt no.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	What is it?
2.	Muar... I think Muar is the second biggest city in the Johore state.
3.	And then the population is now, I think, two hundred thousand....
4.	And consist of, I think, 50% of Malay, 40% of Chinese, and then 10% is Indian.
5.	Around like that.
6.	And then Muar.... Muar don't have much recreation.
7.	I think.... like.... recreation.
8.	Er... I think sometimes go to the cinema.....
9.	Because Muar got five cinema, one or two is force to close up already. Only three left.
10.	Most of the time go to 'tanjung'.
11.	'Tanjung' I think 'tanjung' is quite okay la.
12.	'Tanjung' ah, 'tanjung', the seaside.
13.	Ah. We call it 'tanjung' la.
14.	But the seaside compare to the Penang one is nothing.
15.	I think Penang one is (See N.B.)

(N.B. Utterance 15 was not counted in the units of utterance because part of it had been accidentally erased)

INTERVIEW TEN

<u>Utt No.</u>	<u>Utterance</u>
1.	But then my home town is Kedah.
2.	Er... For last two years.
3.	I think I don't like it.
4.	Because the.... I feel the life there is a bit er... miserable to me as compared to Kedah.
5.	Because... I don't know, the people there....
6.	The life in town areas and as well if compared to often the rural people...
7.	And then I cannot adjust myself, you know.
8.	In their... their daily life and then....
9.	And about the.... the traffic in K.L. also jam....
10.	And then you go to work, you have to wake up early in the morning...
11.	Whereas compared in Kedah at 8 we can, or 7.30 you are still at home.
12.	A bit slower in Kedah if compared to K.L.
13.	Everything has to rush in, is it?
14.	Yes. Just two weeks.
15.	Er... Just come for a short while, shopping. That's all.
16.	Just the same as in Kedah.
17.	I think, not so... so much different.
18.	Yes, Quite similar.
19.	Yes. Previously, I am doing just in the aid section...
20.	Just giving aids to the poor people....
21.	And then after that I am doing the juvenile cases whereby dealing in courts ah
22.	Helping all the juvenile delinquency and...
23.	And then I am doing the prostitution side also....
24.	Helping those underage arrested by police when they caught in hotels and so on.
25.	Er... Just by... to establish their moral and then give counselling to them, to rehabilitate themselves.
26.	Yes. I think so, because... it's how.... the way how the...
27.	I mean their participation ah, in their family side as well as the girl's side....

28. And the way and then how we counsel the girl....
29. We must talk about religious things and so on and must make full use of them.
30. Yes. Some of them but not all. Depend.
31. There are some cases whereby they went back to prostitution also because they had been....
32. I mean they got better, I mean, easy income, you know.....
33. Whereas if they work and then they feel.....
34. They are so lazy and then they have not enough education.....
35. So very difficult for them to survive.
36. Yes. I think so. But I mean.... you must have the Certificate.....
37. I mean to have meds, I mean medical test, you know, for those prostitutes.
38. That one because I am not so deeply in....
39. I am not so interested in actually in prostitution work, you see.....
40. Because when I went to K.L. I choose, I have chosen the children section.
41. I think children section is more interesting rather than prostitution and so on.....
42. Because children section you can help these people, you know, the abandoned child and so on.....
43. And then how you could bring up a child to be a proper human being.
44. Yes. They are more helpless.

APPENDIX B (1)Reading of words from Oral Interviews

1. First	9. Games	17. Library
2. Tense	10. Thing	18. Bridge
3. Aid	11. Resort	19. Probably
4. Dictionary	12. Language	20. Town
5. Service	13. Seniors	21. Tourist
6. Village	14. Field	22. Pay
7. Recreation	15. Lack	23. Also
8. Nervous	16. Basic	24. There

APPENDIX B (2)Reading of sentences

(Listeners 18 and 22)

1. I think I study a lot in the library.
2. As for games, I only play a bit.
3. Because some books have a few copies only.
4. I watch sports and some badminton.
5. And then home ah. at home ah , it is horrible.
6. We make one room as sleeping room.
7. Every time you go you feel so low walking in the street la.
8. The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park.
9. At time there was zoo inside la but they are close some because of lack of fund.
10. Their language, their spoken English... that means if we want to talk with them or communicate with them, we have to use English.
11. Can said it very known in Malaysia.
12. Just only I spend two hours or one hours watching television.
13. The Channel 3 is only purpose for commercial.
14. The life in town areas and as well if compared to often the rural people.
15. Now I am in charge of the media production.
16. So I failed my TOEFL last time.
17. I want to be proficient in English because....
18. I have to act more or less like an ambassador of Malaysia.

APPENDIX B (2)Reading of sentences(Listeners 19 and 20)

1. Now I in charge the media production.
2. So I fail my TOEFL for last time.
3. That means if we want to talk with them or communicate with them, we have to use spoken English.
4. It can be said to be very well-known in Malaysia.
5. Every time you go there, you feel so low walking in the street.
6. D.R. stands for the builder of the Park.
7. There used to be a zoo inside but it's closed now because of lack of fund.
8. And then it's horrible at home.
9. We use one of the rooms as a bedroom.
10. I think I study much in library.
11. And for the games, a bit only la.
12. Because some books ah gotfews only.
13. Sport I watch it and some badminton.

(Listeners 17 and 21)

1. I just spend one or two hours watching television.
2. Channel 3 is only meant for commercials.
3. I want to be proficient... because....
4. Has to act more or less like a ambassador of Malaysia.
5. The life of the townpeople compared with the life of the rural people.

APPENDIX C(1)Phonetic symbols used for transcriptionPure Vowels

<u>Pure Vowels</u>	<u>As in</u>
/i:/	tree, sea
/I/	s <u>i</u> t, p <u>i</u> ck
/e/	s <u>e</u> t, w <u>e</u> nt
/æ/	s <u>a</u> t, h <u>a</u> nd
/ʌ/	s <u>u</u> n, c <u>o</u> me
/ɑ:/	p <u>a</u> ss, p <u>a</u> rt
/ɒ/	d <u>o</u> ck, w <u>a</u> s
/ɔ:/	c <u>o</u> rd, s <u>a</u> w
/ʊ/	p <u>u</u> t, b <u>o</u> ok
/u:/	f <u>o</u> od, m <u>o</u> ve
/ɜ:/	b <u>i</u> rd, s <u>e</u> rve
/ə/	m <u>o</u> th <u>e</u> r, d <u>o</u> ct <u>o</u> r

Diphthongs

<u>Diphthongs</u>	<u>As in</u>
/eI/	l <u>a</u> te, d <u>a</u> y
/aI/	t <u>i</u> me, l <u>i</u> e
/ɔI/	b <u>o</u> y, b <u>o</u> il
/əʊ/	s <u>o</u> , r <u>o</u> ad
/aʊ/	o <u>u</u> t, c <u>o</u> w
/Iə/	d <u>e</u> er, f <u>i</u> er <u>c</u> e
/ɛə/	c <u>a</u> re, w <u>e</u> ar
/ʊə/	p <u>o</u> or, t <u>o</u> ur

Consonants

<u>Consonants</u>	<u>As in</u>
/p/	p <u>i</u> n, s <u>p</u> i <u>n</u>
/b/	b <u>i</u> g, r <u>i</u> b
/t/	t <u>a</u> ke, b <u>u</u> tt <u>e</u> r
/d/	d <u>o</u> , m <u>a</u> d
/k/	k <u>i</u> n, i <u>n</u> c <u>o</u> me
/g/	g <u>o</u> , l <u>e</u> g

Consonants

/f/

/v/

/θ/

/ð/

/s/

/z/

/ʃ/

/ʒ/

/h/

/m/

/n/

/ŋ/

/l/

/tʃ/

/dʒ/

/tr/

/dr/

/j/

/w/

/r/

As infeet, leafvast, leavethink, paththen, gathersoon, mousezoo, easyshop, dishleisure, usualhot, behavemat, semneat, snowsing, anklelet, lickchin, cachjar, dangertrend, attractdream, addressyes, purewet, swimred, very

APPENDIX C(2)Phonetic symbols used for transcribing subjects' mispronunciation
(symbols not listed in Appendix C(1))Pure Vowels

/ɪ/ for /I/
 /ɛ/ for /æ/
 /ɑ/ for /ʌ/ or /a·/

As in

it [it], silly [sɪli]
 pan [pɛn], stand [stɛn]
 some [s m], farm [f m]

Diphthongs

/o/ or /o:/ for / /
 /e/ or /e:/ for /eI/
 /Ia/ for /Iə/

As in

go [go:], spoken [spokən]
 late [let], day[de:]
 area [erIə]

Consonants

/t̃/ for /t/ or /θ/
 /p̃/ for /p/
 /k̃/ for /k/
 /l/ for /ɫ/
 /v/ for /v/

As in

ten[t̃en], think [t̃iŋ]
 pen[p̃en], pick [p̃ik]
 kin[k̃in], kick [k̃ik]
 feel [fil], field [fild]
 very [eri], van [æ n]

Notation

/˘/ unaspirated
 /˘/ unaspirated
 /˘/ unaspirated
 /ɫ/ dark L

NB Unreleased plosives in word-final positions were not marked.

APPENDIX C(3)Prosodic Notation

'	Primary stress
ˈ	Secondary stress
	Weak stress: unmarked
//	Tone group boundary
/	Foot boundary
	Underlined: salient syllables
	Capital letters: tonic syllables
0	Level tone
1	Falling tone
2	High rising tone
3	Low rising tone
4	Falling-rising tone
5	Rising-falling tone
13	Falling plus low rising tone
53	Rising-falling plus low rising tone

Appendix D (1) Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Chinese Subjects)

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists ¹ int. R: Fr. of -h --h	Syn. sc. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h			Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
										W	P/C	S			
										L.	L.	L.			
One	1	street	[stɹi:t]	[stɹit]	a	1	16	1	7				M	L	
One	1	week	[wi:k]	[wik]	a	1	20	1	7				M	L	
Three	3	week	[wi:k]	[wik]	a	2	18(2)	1	4	2	8	2	M	L	
One	1	keep	[ki:p]	[kip]	a	1	22	1	7				M	L	
Two	2	need	[ni:d]	[nid]	a	1	7	1	7				M	L	
Two	2	mean	[mi:n]	[min]	a	1	3	1	6			1	M	L	
Three	3	mean	[mi:n]	[min]	a	1	1	1	7			7	M	L	
Three	3	speak	[spi:k]	[epik]	a	1	13	1	5			2	M	L	
One	1	feel	[fi:t]	[fil]	a,c	2	16	2	7				M	L	
Three	3	feel	[fi:t]	[fil]	a,c	2	12	2	2			5	M	L	
One	1	field	[fi:ld]	[fil]	a,c,d	1	17	2	7				M	L	
One	1	beaches	[bi:tʃɪz]	[bi:tʃɪs]	a	3	17	1	6	1			D	L	+
One	1	senior	[si:nɪə]	[sinis]	a	1	21	1	2			5	D	L	+
Three	3	Chinese	[tʃaɪni:z]	[tʃaɪnis]	a,c	1	10	2	7				D	L	-
Three	3	people	[pi:pəl]	[pipəl]	a,c,h	1	21	3	7				D	L	+
Four	4	people	[pi:pəl]	[pipəl]	a,c,h	2	1	3	7				D	L	+
Four	4	sleeping	[slɪpiŋ]	[slipɪŋ]	a	2	21(2)	1	4	4	6	4	D	L	+
Four	4	resort	[rɪzɔ:t]	[riset]	a,a	1	9	2	7				D	L	-
One	1	pool	[pu:t]	[pvl]	a,c	3	6(2)	2	14				M	L	
One	1	park	[pɑ:k]	[pək]	a	3	5	1	7				M	L	
One	1	garden	[gɑ:dn]	[gaden]	a,g	1	7(2)	1	4			10	M	L	
Three	3	farmers	[fɑ:məz]	[femas]	a	1	8	2	7				D	L	+
Three	3	after	[ɑ:ftə]	[oftə]	a	1	17	1	5			2	D	L	-
Two	2	sport	[spɔ:t]	[spot]	a	2	8	1	7				M	L	+
					a	13	13	1	7				M	L	

Keys: occ. = occurrence; Fr. = frequency; list = listener; int. = intelligibility; syn. = syntactic; sc. = scope; unint. = unintelligibility;

R ratings: C = clause; S = sentence; L = level; W = word; P = phrase; sy. = syllabic; T = type; M = mono; D = di; p = poly;

Gr. Grammatical L = lexical; F = function;

Appendix D (1) Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Chinese Subjects)

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists +h -h	Fr. of lists' int. R: -h --h	Syn. ac. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/C L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
One	1	walking	[wɔːkɪŋ]	[wɛkɪŋ]	a	1	16	1	7			D	L	+
Three	3	also	[ɔːtsəʊ]	[ɔːsoː]	a, b, e	1	14	3	2	5	4	D	L	+
Two	2	football	[fʊtbɔːl]	[fʊtboːl]	a, c	1	13	2	7			D	L	-
Four	4	important	[ɪmˈpɔːtnt]	[ɪmpɔːtnt]	a, d	1	1	2	4	3	2	P	L	+
Three	3	important	[ɪmˈpɔːtnt]	[ɪmpɔːtnt]	a, d	1	17	2	7			P	L	+
Three	3	already	[ɔːlɹedi]	[ɔːlɹedi]	a, e	1	13	2	1	6	5	P	L	+
Nine	9	already	[ɔːlɹedi]	[ɔːlɹedi]	a, e	1	9	2		7	7	P	L	+
One	1	orientation	[ɔːrɪntɪeɪʃən]	[ɔːrɪntɪeɪʃən]	a, b	1	20	2		7	7	P	L	+
Three	3	heard	[hɜːd]	[hɜːd]	a	1	17	1	6	1	1	M	L	+
One	1	lack	[læk]	[læk]	a	1	9	1	1	6	1	M	L	
Four	4	can	[kæn]	[kæn]	a, h	3	7(3)	2	1	20		M	F	
One	1	stand	[stænd]	[stænd]	a, d	1	7	2		7	1	M	L	
One	1	have	[hæv]	[hæf]	a, c	2	19	2	7			M	F	
Four	4	have	[hæv]	[hæf]	a, c	2	23	2	7			M	F	
Four	4	have	[hæv]	[hæf]	a, c	2	3	2	7			M	L	
Three	3	have	[hæv]	[hæf]	a, c	3	8	2	6	1	1	M	L	
Two	2	cannot	[kənət]	[kənət]	a, c		4	2	5	2		M	L	
Three	3	cannot	[kənət]	[kənət]	a, h	1	18	2	1	6	2	M	L	+
Three	3	paddy	[pædi]	[pædi]	a, c	1	19	2	7			M	F	+
Three	3	tapper	[tæpə]	[tæpə]	a, h	1	10	2	7			D	F	+
Four	4	language	[læŋgwɪdʒ]	[læŋgwɪdʒ]	a, h	1	13	2	7			D	F	+
One	1	management	[mæneɪdʒmənt]	[mæneɪtʃmənt]	a, a, c	4	7(2)	2		13	14	D	L	-
Two	2	badminton	[bædmɪntən]	[bædmɪntən]	a	1	8(2)	2	14			D	L	-
Four	4	actually	[æktʃʊəli]	[æktʃʊəli]	a	1	6	2		5	7	D	L	+
One	1	fund	[fʌnd]	[fʌnd]	a, d	1	2	3	1	5	5	D	L	+
One	1	but	[bʌt]	[bʌt]	a	3	25(2)	4	4	8		P	L	+
Two	2	some	[sʌm]	[sʌm]	a	1	23	1	1	5	1	P	L	+
Three	3	some	[sʌm]	[sʌm]	a	2	5	1	7			P	L	+
Two	2	must	[mʌst]	[mʌst]	a	1	10	1	7			P	L	+
One	1	fund	[fʌnd]	[fʌnd]	a, d	1	9	2	1	6	6	M	L	
One	1	but	[bʌt]	[bʌt]	a	1	9	1	1	6	6	M	F	
Two	2	some	[sʌm]	[sʌm]	a	2	6	1	7			M	L	
Three	3	some	[sʌm]	[sʌm]	a	1	13	1	6	1	1	M	L	
Two	2	must	[mʌst]	[mʌst]	a, d	1	7	1	7			M	L	
Two	2	must	[mʌst]	[mʌst]	a, d	1	11	2	6	1	1	M	F	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' int. R +h h -h -h	Syn. sec. of unitt. R: Fr. of -h, -h W P/C S L. L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P- sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Two	2	Monday	[ˈmʌndɪ]	[ˈmɪnde]	a, a	1	12	2	7		M	L	-
Two	2	sometimes	[ˈsʌmtaɪmz]	[ˈsʌmtaɪms]	a, c	1	6	2	7		D	L	-
Three	3	rubber	[ˈrʌbər]	[ˈr bər]	a	1	6	1	5	7	D	L	-
Four	4	study	[ˈstʌdi]	[ˈstadi]	a	1	21	1	1		D	L	+
Nine	9	nothing	[ˈnʌθɪŋ]	[ˈnʌtɪŋ]	a, c	1	14	2	1	6	D	L	+
Nine	9	second	[ˈsekənd]	[ˈseken]	a, d	1	2	2	1		D	L	+
Three	3	secondary	[ˈsekəndəri]	[ˈsekəndəri]	a	1	17	1	2	1	P	L	+
Nine	9	compare	[ˈkæmpəɪz]	[ˈkæmp ə]	a, h	1	14	2	7		D	L	+
One	1	air	[eə]	[e]	b	2	14	1	1	4	M	L	-
					b	1	15	1	6	6	M	L	
Three	3	communicate	[kəmjuːnɪkeɪt]	[kəmjuniket]	a, a, b, h	1	14	4	7		P	L	+
Four	4	communicate	[kəmjuːnɪkeɪt]	[kəmjuniket]	a, a, b, h	1	2	4	7		P	L	+
Nine	9	recreation	[ˌrekriˈeɪʃən]	[ˌrikri'e ʃən]	a, b	2	6	2	1	7	P	L	-
					a, b		7	2	7		P	L	-
One	1	low	[ləʊ]	[lo:]	b	1	16	1	5	2	M	L	
One	1	go	[gəʊ]	[go:]	b	4	3	1	1		M	L	
					b		10	1	7		M	L	
					b		16	1	7		M	L	
					b		17	1	7		M	L	
Nine	9	go	[gəʊ]	[go:]	b	2	8	1	7		M	L	
					b		10	1	5	2	M	L	
One	1	so	[səʊ]	[so:]	b	9	13	1	7		M	L	
					b		14	1	5	2	M	L	
					b		15	1	7		M	L	
					b		16	1	7		M	L	
					b		19(3)	1	7	14	M	L F	
Three	3	so	[səʊ]	[so:]	b		21	1	7		M	L	
					b		26	1	7		M	F	
					b	2	5	1	7		M	F	
					b		19	1	7		M	F	
Two	2	most	[məʊst]	[mos]	b, d	1	9	2	7		M	L	
Three	3	most	[məʊst]	[mos]	b, d	1	5	2	7		M	L	
Three	3	don't	[dəʊnt]	[don]	b, d	2	16	2	7		M	F	
					b, d		18	2	7		M	F	
Four	4	known	[nəʊn]	[non]	b	1	7	1	1	6	M	L	
Four	4	home	[həʊm]	[hom]	b	2	18(2)	1	1	6	M	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' int. R: --h --h --h	Syn. sc. of uninit. R: Fr. of --h, --h W P/C L. L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
One	1	only	[ˈɒnli]	[ˈɒni]	b,e	1	4	2	7	1	D	L	+
Two	2	only	[ˈɒnli]	[ˈɒni]	b,e	2	2	2	7	2	D	L	+
Three	3	programme	[ˈprɒɡræm]	[ˈprɒgræm]	b,e	2	6	2	7	1	D	L	+
Four	4	spoken	[ˈspʊkən]	[ˈspʊkən]	a,b,h	2	18(2)	3	2	4	D	L	+
Two	2	games	[ˈgeɪmz]	[ˈgeɪm]	b	1	2	1	7	7	D	L	+
Four	4	pay	[peɪ]	[pe:]	b	1	2	2	1	6	M	L	+
					b,h	4	22(3)	2	18	1	M	L	
Nine	9	state	[steɪt]	[stet]	b,h	1	23	2	6	3	M	L	
One	1	major	[ˈmeɪdʒə]	[ˈmedʒə]	b	1	2	1	7	1	M	L	
Three	3	able	[ˈeɪbəl]	[ˈeɪl]	b	1	24	1	7		M	L	
Three	3	ashame	[ˈʃeɪm]	[ˈʃem]	b,c	1	16	2	6	7	D	L	+
Four	4	famous	[ˈfeɪməs]	[ˈfeməs]	b	1	12	2	1	1	D	L	+
One	1	playground	[ˈpleɪgraʊnd]	[ˈplegrəʊn]	b,d	1	6	1	7	5	D	L	+
One	1	majoring	[ˈmeɪdʒɪŋ]	[ˈmedʒɪŋ]	b	1	8	2	7		D	L	
Nine	9	population	[ˈpɒpjʊleɪʃən]	[ˈpɒpjuleɪən]	b,h	1	24	1	7		P	L	+
One	1	that	[θæt]	[dæt]	a,c	1	3	1	7	1	P	L	+
Four	4	that	[θæt]	[dæt]	a,c	2	21	2	2	2	M	F	-
					a,c	2	2	2	7		M	F	
Nine	9	that	[θæt]	[dæt]	a,c	1	9	2	7		M	F	+
One	1	there	[ðeə]	[dɛə]	c	4	5	1	7		M	L	+
					c		9	1	6	6	M	L	
Three	3	there	[ðeə]	[dɛə]	c		10	1	6		M	L	
Four	4	there	[ðeə]	[dɛə]	c		3	1	7		M	L	
One	1	then	[ðen]	[den]	c	1	9	1	7		M	L	
Three	3	then	[ðen]	[den]	c	4	17	1	7		M	F	+
					c		7	1	7		M	F	
One	1	than	[θæn]	[den]	a,c	2	10	1	7		M	F	+
					a,c		12	1	5	7	M	L	
Three	3	them	[ðem]	[dem]	c	1	20	2	7		M	F	+
One	1	they	[ðeɪ]	[de]	b,c	2	7	2	7		M	F	+
Three	3	they	[ðeɪ]	[de]	b,c	1	21	2	6	1	M	L	
					b,c		22	2	7		M	L	
					b,c		6	2	7		M	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists: +h -h --h	Sy. sc. of unit. K: Fr. of -h, --h W P/C L. L. S. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Two	2	this	[ˈðɪs]	[ˈdɪs]	c	1	7	1	7		M	L	
Three	3	this	[ˈðɪs]	[ˈdɪs]	c	2	18(2)	1	5	1	M	L	
Four	4	this	[ˈðɪs]	[ˈdɪs]	c	1	13	1	7		M	L	
Four	4	their	[ðeɪ]	[dɛɪ]	c	3	2(2)	1	7	7	M	F	
One	1	the	[ðə]	[də]	c	13	9	1	7		M	F	
					c		5(2)	1	12	2	M	F	
					c		7(4)	1	4	4	M	F	
					c		14	1	5	2	M	F	
					c		15	1	7		M	F	
					c		16	1	7		M	F	
					c		20	1	7	6	M	F	
					c		21(2)	1	12	2	M	F	
Two	2	the	[ðə]	[də]	c	2	26	1	7		M	F	
Three	3	the	[ðə]	[də]	c	2	11	1	6	1	M	F	
Four	4	the	[ðə]	[də]	c	2	5	1	7		M	F	
One	1	other	[ˈʌðə]	[ˈdʌ]	a,c	1	20	2	6	4	M	F	
Four	4	other	[ˈʌðə]	[ˈdʌ]	a,c	1	23	2	7	7	D	F	
Nine	9	bothering	[ˈbʌðərɪŋ]	[ˈbʌðərɪŋ]	a,c	1	22	2	5	2	D	F	
One	1	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋ]	c,d	3	12	2	7	1	P	L	
Two	2	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋ]	c,d	2	23	2	4	2	M	L	
Nine	9	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋ]	c,d	6	26	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		1	2	5	2	M	L	
					c,d		12	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		2	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		3	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		4	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		7	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		8	2	7		M	L	
					c,d		11	2	3	4	M	L	
Two	2	three	[θri:]	[tɪri:]	c	1	7	1	7		M	L	
Four	4	three	[θri:]	[tɪri:]	c	1	23	1	7		M	L	
One	1	things	[θɪŋz]	[tɪŋz]	c	1	21	1	6	1	M	L	

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Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	N. of Error	Er. of lists' int. R:	Sync. ac. of unlit. R:	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Address Error
Nine	9	thousand	['θaʊzənd]	['θaʊzən]	c,c,d	1	1	3	7		D	L	+
Two	2	helpful	['helpfʊl]	['hepfʊl]	a,e	1	5	2	7		D	L	-
Two	2	difficult	['dɪfɪkəlt]	['dɪfɪkət]	e	1	9	1	7		P	L	+
Two	2	dictionary	['dɪkʃənəri]	['dɪkʃənəri]	c,e	1	9	2	1	2 4 5	P	L	+
Two	2	library	['laɪbrəri]	['laɪbrəri]	c,c	2	1	2	7	1 4 2	P	L	+
Two	2	very	['veri]	['veli]	c,c	3	9	2	7		P	L	+
Four	4	very	['veri]	['veli]	c	1	7	1	7		D	L	+
Four	4	room	['ru:m]	['dʊm]	c	1	5	1	7		D	L	+
Four	4	rent	['rent]	['fɜ:m]	c	1	7	1	7		D	L	+
Four	4	horrible	['hɒrəbəl]	['hɒdɪbəl]	c,c	1	18	2			P	L	+
One	1	pleasure	['pleʒə]	['pleʒə]	c	1	17	1	1	1 5 2 1 3 3	D	L	+
Three	3	English	['ɪŋɡlɪʃ]	['ɪŋɡlɪs]	c	4	11	1	7		D	L	+
Four	4	English	['ɪŋɡlɪʃ]	['ɪŋɡlɪs]	c	2	1	1	4	3	D	L	+
Four	4	bridge	['brɪdʒ]	['brɪtʃ]	c	1	6	1	6	1	D	L	+
Four	4	leisure	['leɪʒə]	['leɪʒə]	c	1	9	1	4	3	M	L	+
Three	3	village	['vɪlɪdʒ]	['vɪlɪtʃ]	a,c,c	2	1	3	7		D	L	+
Two	2	two	['tu:]	['tu:]	a,c,c	1	7	1	7	7	D	L	+
Four	4	two	['tu:]	['tu:]	h	3	20	1	7		M	L	+
Four	4	time	['taɪm]	['taɪm]	h	1	13	1	7		M	L	+
Four	4	town	['taʊn]	['taʊn]	h	1	10	1	7		M	L	+
Four	4	quite	['kwɪt]	['kwɪt]	h	1	6	1	7		M	L	+
Three	3	university	['ju:nɪvɜ:səti]	['ju:nɪvɜ:sɪti]	a,a,c	1	13	3	1	6 5 1	P	L	+

Appendix D (2) Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Malay subjects)

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Ult. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' int. R: +h h -h --h	Sync. ac. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L S L. L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-ay.	Gr. T. of words L/F	Streams Error
Ten	10	feel	[fi:l]	[fil]	a,c	2	4	2	7		M	L	
Ten	10	mean	[mi:n]	[min]	a,c	6	33	2		5	M	L	
					a		27	1	7		M	L	
					a		32(2)	1	7		M	L	
					a		36	1	3	4	M	L	
					a		37(2)	1	6	6	M	L	
Ten	10	weeks	[wi:ks]	[wiks]	a	1	14	1	7		M	L	
Five	5	media	[mi:di:]	[midia]	a	3	2	1	6	1	D	L	
					a		14(2)	1	14		D	L	
Ten	10	dealing	[di:liŋ]	[diliŋ]	a	1	21	1	1	6	D	L	
Ten	10	deeply	[di:pli]	[dipli]	a	1	38	1	1	5	D	L	
Seven	7	meeting	[mi:tiŋ]	[mitiŋ]	a	1	10	1	7		D	L	
Ten	10	people	[pi:pəl]	[pipəl]	a,c,h	3	5	3	7		D	L	
					a,c,h		6	3	4	2	D	L	
					a,c,h		20	3	6	1	D	L	
					a,c,h		10	3	7		D	L	
					a,c,h		12	3	7		D	L	
					a,c,h		14	3	7		D	L	
					a	1	32	1	7		D	L	
Ten	10	easy	[i:zi]	[izi]	a	1	25	3		7	P	L	
Ten	10	rehabilitate	[ri:həbilitet]	[rihibilitet]	a,b,f	1	11	2	7		D	L	
Five	5	improve	[impru:v]	[impruf]	a,c	1	6	2			D	L	
Seven	7	improve	[impru:v]	[impruf]	a,c	1	40	2	7		D	L	
Ten	10	choose	[tʃu:z]	[tʃus]	a,c	1	7	2	7		M	L	
Five	5	class	[kla:s]	[klos]	a,h	1	2	2	7		M	L	
Ten	10	last	[la:st]	[las]	a,d	1	2	2	7		M	L	
Five	5	charge	[tʃɑ:dʒ]	[tʃɑ:tʃ]	a,c	2	2	2		6	M	L	
					a,c		4	2		1	M	L	
					a,c		2	2		5	M	L	
					a,d	1	2	2	4	3	P	L	
Seven	7	department	[di:pɑ:mənt]	[di:pɑ:ment]	a,d	1	27	3	7		P	L	
Ten	10	participation	[pɑ:tisipeiʃən]	[pətiʃipeʃən]	a,b,h	1	24	2	7		P	L	
Ten	10	caught	[kɔ:t]	[kət]	a,h	1	21	2			M	L	
Ten	10	courts	[kɔ:ts]	[kots]	a,h	1	15	1	7	6	M	L	
Ten	10	short	[ʃɔ:t]	[ʃot]	a	1	29	2	6	1	M	L	
Ten	10	talk	[tɔ:k]	[tək]	a,h	1	9	3	6		M	L	
Ten	10	also	[ɔ:lsoʊ]	[ɔso]	a,b,e	3	23	3	6	1	D	L	
					a,b,e						D	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' int. R: +h h -h --h	Syn. sc. of unit. R: fr. of -h, --h W P/L S L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D P-ay.	Gr. T. of words: L/f	Stress Error
Five	5	first	[fɜːst]	[fɜːs]	a, d	2	4(2)	2	6	1	M	L	
Five	5	Canada	[kænədə]	[kænədə]	a, a, a, h	1	12	4	6	1	P	L	+
Five	5	month	[mʌnθ]	[mʌnt]	a, c	1	13	2	7		M	L	
Seven	5	month	[mʌnθ]	[mʌnt]	c	1	17	1	7		M	L	
Ten	10	come	[kʌm]	[kʌm]	a, h	1	15	2	7		M	L	
Ten	10	must	[mʌst]	[mas]	a, d	3	29(2)	2	12	2	M	F	
Five	5	attend	[ə'tend]	[etən]	a, d	1	36	2	3	4	M	F	
Ten	10	adjust	[ə'dʒʌst]	[ədjʌs]	d	1	7	2	7		D	L	-
Ten	10	arrested	[ə'restɪd]	[erestɪd]	a, a	1	24	2	7		D	L	-
Ten	10	abandon	[ə'bændən]	[ebændən]	a	1	42	1	7		P	L	-
Seven	7	administrative	[ədminɪ'strɪtɪv]	[edminɪstretɪf]	a, ac	1	4	3	1	5	P	L	-
Five	5	so	[əʊ]	[so:]	b	4	2	1	7		M	L	-
Seven	7	so	[əʊ]	[so:]	b		10	1	7		M	L	
Ten	10	so	[əʊ]	[so:]	b	2	10	1	7		M	F	
					b	12	17(2)	1	14		M	L	
					b		24	1	7		M	F	
					b		26	1	7		M	F	
					b		29	1	6	1	M	F	
					b		34	1	7		M	L	
					b		35	1	7		M	L	
					b		36	1	7		M	L	
					b		38	1	2	5	M	L	
					b		39	1	7		M	L	
					b		41	1	7		M	F	
					b		42	1	7		M	F	
Ten	10	go	[gəʊ]	[go:]	b	1	10	1	7		M	L	
Ten	10	don't	[daʊnt]	[don]	b, d	2	3	2	7		M	F	
Ten	10	know	[naʊ]	[no:]	b, d	4	5	2	7		M	F	
					b		5	1	7		M	L	
					b		7	1	7		M	L	
					b		37	1	4	2	M	L	
					b		42	1	7	1	M	L	

Int. No.	S No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' +h h -h --h	Syn. sc. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L L. S L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error	
Five	5	spoken	['spʊkən]	['spokən]	b	1	8	1	4	2	1	1	-	
Seven	7	spoken	['spʊkən]	['spokən]	b	1	6	1	2	2	3	3	-	
Five	5	social	['səʊʃəl]	['sosəl]	b,c,c	1	1	3	2	5	5	5	-	
Five	5	programme	['prɜː græm]	['progrem]	a,b	1	3	2	7				-	
Ten	10	hotel	['həʊtel]	['hotel]	b,c	1	24	2	7				-	
Ten	10	slower	['sləʊwə]	['sləwə]	b	1	12	1	7				+	
Ten	10	chosen	['tʃɒzən]	['tʃosən]	b,c	1	40	2	7				-	
Five	5	TOEFL	['təʊfl]	['tɒfl]	b,h	1	10	2	1	6	7		-	
Seven	7	posting	['pəʊstɪŋ]	['postɪŋ]	b	1	8	1	7				-	
Seven	7	make	['meɪk]	['mek]	b	1	12	1	7				L	
Seven	7	same	['seɪm]	['sem]	b	1	13	1	7				L	
Ten	10	same	['seɪm]	['sem]	b	1	16	1	7				L	
Ten	10	eight	['eɪt]	['et]	b	1	11	1	7				L	
Ten	10	way	['weɪ]	['we]	b	1	28	1	4	3	3		L	
Ten	10	aid	['eɪd]	['ed]	b	2	19	1	1	5	5	1	L	
Seven	7	able	['eɪbəl]	['əbəl]	b	1	20	1		7	6	1	L	
Seven	7	explain	['ɪkspleɪn]	['ekspleɪn]	b,c	1	13	2	7				-	
Seven	7	basic	['beɪsɪk]	['besɪk]	a,b	1	14	2	7				-	
Ten	10	daily	['deɪli]	['delɪ]	b	1	19	1	7				+	
Ten	10	cases	['keɪsɪz]	['kesəz]	b,h	2	8	1	7				+	
Ten	10	lazy	['leɪzi]	['leɪzɪ]	b,h	2	21	2	7				+	
Seven	7	conversation	['kɒnvɜːseɪʃən]	['konvɜːʃən]	b	1	31	2	7				+	
Five	5	foundation	['faʊndeɪʃən]	['faʊndesən]	b,c	1	34	1	6	1			-	
Ten	10	underage	['ʌndəˌeɪdʒ]	['ʌndəɪtʃ]	b,c	1	16	2	7				-	
Ten	10	traffic	['træfɪk]	['træfɪk]	a,h	1	4	2	1	6	2	3	1	+
Ten	10	police	['pɒliːs]	['pɒliːs]	a,h	1	24	2	7	7	7		-	
Ten	10	compare	['kəmpeɪz]	['kæmpɪz]	a,h	3	9	2					-	
Five	5	production	['prɒdʌkʃən]	['prɒdʌsən]	a,c,h	2	24	2	7	1	1	1	-	
Seven	7	proficient	['prɒfɪʃənt]	['prɒfɪsən]	a,c,h	1	6	2	5	1	1	1	-	
					a,c,h	2	11	2	7				-	
					a,h	12	12	2	7				-	
					a,c,h	2	2	3	6	1	1	1	-	
					a,c,d	1	14	3	7				-	
						7	7	3	1	1	4	4	-	

Int No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists: +h h -h -h	Syn. ac. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L S L. L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D P- sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Five	5	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋ]	c, d	3	7	2	7		M	L	
Seven	7	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪr]	c, d		8	2	7		M	L	
Ten	10	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋ]	c, d	1	12	2	7		M	L	
					c, d	5	11	2	7		M	L	
					c, d		3	2	7		M	L	
					c, d		17	2	7		M	L	
					c, d		26	2	7		M	L	
					c, d		36	2	7		M	L	
					c, d		41	2	7		M	L	
Ten	10	things	[θɪŋz]	[tɪŋz]	c	1	29	1	4	2 1	M	L	
Five	5	three	[θri:]	[tɪr:]	c	1	6	1	7		M	L	
Five	5	something	[sʌmθɪŋ]	[sʌmθɪŋ]	c	1	5	1	7		D	L	-
Ten	10	everything	[evrɪθɪŋ]	[evrɪθɪŋ]	c	1	13	1	7		P	L	+
Ten	10	then	[ðæn]	[dæn]	c	1	41	1	7		M	F	
Ten	10	they	[ðeɪ]	[de]	b, c	7	24	2	7		M	F	
					b, c		31(2)	2	14		M	F	
					b, c		32	2	7		M	F	
					b, c		33	2	1 6	5 2	M	F	
					b, c		34	2	7		M	F	
					b, c		44	2	7		M	F	
Ten	10	those	[ðəʊz]	[dos]	b, c	1	24	2	7	7	M	F	
Ten	10	them	[ðem]	[dem]	c	2	29	1	3	3 1	M	F	
Ten	10	their	[ðeə]	[deə]	c	5	30	1	7		M	F	
					c		8(2)	1	14		M	F	
					c		25	1	7		M	F	
					c		27(2)	1	14		M	F	
Ten	10	there	[ðeə]	[deə]	c	2	4	1	7		M	L	
					c		31	1	7		M	F	
Ten	10	then	[ðen]	[den]	c	6	7	1	7		M	F	
					c		10	1	7		M	F	
					c		21	1	7		M	F	
					c		23	1	7		M	F	
					c		25	1	7		M	F	
					c		43	1	7		M	F	
Seven	7	that	[ðæt]	[dæt]	c	1	17	1	7		M	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' int. R: +h h -h --h	Syn. sc. of unit. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L S L. L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P- sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Ten	10	that	[ˈθæt]	[dæɪt]	c	3	15	1	7		M	L	
					c		21	1	7		M	F	
					c		38	1	2	5	M	L	
Five	5	the	[ðə]	[də]	c	5	2	1	7		M	F	
					c		4	1	6	1	M	F	
					c		7	1	7		M	F	
					c		12(2)	1	13	1	M	F	
Seven	7	the	[ðə]	[də]	c	8	2	1	7		M	F	
					c		3	1	7	7	M	F	
					c		11	1	7		M	F	
					c		13	1	7		M	F	
					c		16	1	7		M	F	
					c		18(2)	1	14		M	F	
					c		19	1	7		M	F	
					c	17	4	1	7		M	F	
					c		5	1	7		M	F	
					c		6	1	7		M	F	
					c		9(2)	1	14		M	F	
					c		10	1	7		M	F	
					c		16	1	7		M	F	
					c		19	1	7		M	F	
					c		20	1	6	1	M	F	
					c		21	1	7		M	F	
					c		22	1	7		M	F	
					c		23	1	7		M	F	
					c		26	1	4	3	M	F	
					c		28(2)	1	14		M	F	
					c		36	1	5	2	M	F	
					c		42	1	7		M	F	
Ten	10	themselves	[ˈðemselvz]	[ˈdemseɪfz]	c, c, e	1	25	3	7		D	F	
Five	5	want	[wɒnt]	[wɒn]	a, d	2	9	2	7		M	L	
					a, d		11	2	7		M	L	
Five	5	very	[ˈveri]	[ˈveri]	c	1	8	1	7		D	L	
Five	5	government	[ˈgʌvnmənt]	[ˈgʌvnmənt]	c, d	1	4	2	4	2	P	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' Int. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Five	5	Vancouver	[ˈvæŋkʊvə]	[ˈwɪŋkʊvə]	a, a, c, c	1	12	4	4 2 1	1	L	-
Five	5	development	[dɪˈvɛləpmənt]	[dɪˈwɛləpmənt]	a, c, d	1	1	3	5 2	5	L	+
Seven	7	language	[ˈlæŋɡwɪdʒ]	[ˈlæŋɡwɛt]	c	1	11	1	7		L	-
Seven	7	management	[ˈmænɪdʒmənt]	[ˈmɛnɛtʃmənt]	a, c, d	2	18	3	7 7		L	-
					a, c, d		19	3	7 7		L	-
Five	5	English	[ˈɪŋɡlɪʃ]	[ˈɪŋɡlɪs]	c	1	8	1	7		L	-
Five	5	especially	[ɪˈspeʃəli]	[ɪˈspɛʃəli]	a, c	1	8	2	6 1	1	L	+
Ten	10	establish	[ɪˈstæblɪʃ]	[ɪˈstɛblɪs]	a, c	1	25	2	5 2	2	L	+
Five	5	poor	[puː]	[ˈpʊɹ]	h	1	8	1	7 1		L	
Ten	10	poor	[puː]	[ˈpʊɹ]	h	1	20	1	5 1	2	L	
Ten	10	two	[tuː]	[ˈtuː]	h	1	14	1	7		L	
Ten	10	test	[test]	[ˈtɛs]	a, h	1	37	2	3 4	3 1	L	
Seven	7	time	[taɪm]	[ˈtɪɪm]	h	1	7				L	
Five	5	campus	[ˈkæmpəs]	[ˈkæmpəs]	a, h	3	2	2	7 7	7	L	-
					a, h		12	2	2 5	5	L	-
					a, h		14	2	7		L	-
Ten	10	Proper	[ˈprɒpə]	[ˈprɒpə]	h	1	43	1	7		L	-
Ten	10	counsel	[ˈkaʊnsəl]	[ˈkaʊnsəl]	c, h	1	28	2	7		L	-
Ten	10	counselling	[ˈkaʊnsəlɪŋ]	[ˈkaʊnsəlɪ]	h	1	25	1	7		L	-
Five	5	science	[ˈsaɪns]	[ˈsaɪns]	e	2	1	1	2 5	5	L	-
					e		4	1	4 3	2 1	L	-
Ten	10	help	[help]	[help]	e	1	42	1	7		L	-
Ten	10	child	[tʃaɪld]	[tʃaɪld]	e	2	42	1	7		L	-
					e		43	1	7		L	-
Ten	10	helping	[ˈhelpɪŋ]	[ˈhelpɪŋ]	e	2	22	1	1 6	6	L	-
					e		24	1		7	L	-
Ten	10	helpless	[ˈhelpləs]	[ˈhelpləs]	e	1	44	1	7		L	-
Ten	10	children	[ˈtʃɪldrən]	[ˈtʃɪldrən]	e	2	40	1	7		L	-
					e		41	1	7		L	-
Ten	10	section	[ˈsekʃən]	[ˈseʃən]	e	4	19	1	2 3	5	L	-
					e		40	1	2 5	5	L	-
					e		41	1	2 5	5	L	-
					e		42	1	2 5	5	L	-
Seven	7	ambassador	[ˈæmbəsədɔː]	[ˈæmbəsədɔː]	f	1	15	1	1 5	1 2 3	L	-

Appendix D (A) Segmental errors and their degrees of intelligibility (Indian subjects)

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' +h h -h --h	Syn. sc. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L L. S L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-ey.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Six	6	feel	[fi:]	[fil]	a, c	1	28	2	5	2	M	L	
Eight	8	week	[wi:k]	[wik]	d	1	20	1	3	4	M	L	
Eight	8	field	[fi:ld]	[fild]	a	1	2	1	5	2	M	L	
Six	6	need	[ni:d]	[nid]	a	1	18	1	5	2	M	L	
Six	6	seniors	[si:niz]	[siniz]	a	1	28	1	2	3	D	L	+
Six	6	people	[pi:pəl]	[pipəl]	a, c, h	1	3	3	7		D	L	+
Six	6	forms	[fɔ:mz]	[foms]	a	1	4	1	4	3	M	L	
Eight	8	sports	[spɔ:ts]	[spɔts]	a	1	6	1	7		M	L	
Eight	8	also	[ɔ:lso]	[bso]	a, b, e	1	18	3	2	5	D	L	+
Eight	8	orientation	[ɔ:rienteʃən]	[ɔrienteʃən]	a, b	1	20	2	3	4	P	L	
Six	6	nervous	[nɜ:vəs]	[nʊəs]	a, c	1	28	2	2	2	D	L	+
Six	6	person	[pɜ:sən]	[pəsn]	a, h	1	22	2	7		D	L	-
Six	6	purpose	[pɜ:pəs]	[pəpəs]	a, h	1	25	2	1	6	D	L	+
Six	6	month	[mʌnθ]	[mant]	a, c	1	28	2	5	2	M	L	
Six	6	come	[kʌm]	[kam]	a, h	1	2	2	7		M	L	
Eight	8	communication	[kəmju:nikeiʃən]	[kəmjvnikeʃən]	a, a, b, h	2	1	4	2	1	P	L	+
Six	6	comment	[kəment]	[kəmen]	a, a, b, h	2	2	4	5	2	P	L	+
Six	6	contact	[kəntækt]	[kəntækt]	a, d, h	2	25	3	7		P	L	-
Six	6	commercial	[kəməʃiəl]	[kəməʃiəl]	a, d, h	1	28	3	5	2	D	L	-
Eight	8	block	[blɒk]	[blæk]	a, c, d, h	1	25	4	1	6	P	L	+
Eight	8	watch	[wɒtʃ]	[wɒtʃ]	a	1	16	1	2	5	M	L	
Eight	8	lot	[lɒt]	[lɒt]	a	1	14	1	7		M	L	
Six	6	problem	[prɒbləm]	[prɒbləm]	a	1	12	1	7		M	L	
Six	6	projects	[prɒdʒekts]	[prɒbləm]	a, h	1	6	2	7		M	L	-
Eight	8	watching	[wɒtʃɪŋ]	[prɒdʒekts]	a, d, h	2	12(2)	3	14	2	D	L	+
Six	6	watching	[wɒtʃɪŋ]	[wɒtʃɪŋ]	a	1	13	1	7		D	L	-
Six	6	probably	[prəbəbli]	[wɒtʃɪŋ]	a	1	21	1	7		D	L	-
Eight	8	population	[pɒpjuleiʃən]	[prəbəbli]	a, f, h	1	28	3	5	2	P	L	-
Six	6	comfortable	[kɒmfətəbəl]	[pɒpjuleiʃən]	a, b, h	1	13	3	7		P	L	+
Six	6	jokes	[dʒɒks]	[kɒmfətəbəl]	a, h	1	9	2	7		P	L	-
Six	6	most	[məʊst]	[dʒɒks]	b	1	4	1	7		M	L	
Eight	8	most	[məʊst]	[məʊst]	b, d	2	28	2	5	2	M	L	
					b, d	2	10	2	7		M	L	
					b, d	2	11	2	7		M	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Ult. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' int. R: +h h -h --h	Syn. ac. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, - h W P/L S L. L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P- sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Six	6	don't	[dɒnt]	[dɒn]	b, d	2	23(2)	2	14		M	L	
Eight	8	so	[səʊ]	[sə]	b	4	19	1	7		M	L	
					b		20	1	3	4	M	L	
					b		22	1	7		M	L	
					b		23	1	7		M	L	
Eight	8	show	[ʃəʊ]	[o:]	b	1	15	1	7		M	L	
Eight	8	both	[bəʊθ]	[bɒθ]	b, c	1	3	2	7		M	F	
Six	6	hotel	[həʊtəl]	[hɒtəl]	b, e	1	16	2	1	6	D	L	+
Six	6	over	[əʊvə]	[ʊvə]	b, c	1	13	2	4	3	D	L	-
Six	6	only	[əʊnli]	[ɒnli]	b	2	21	1	4	3	D	L	-
					b		25	1	1	6	D	L	-
Six	6	programmes	[ˈprəʊgræməz]	[ˈprɒgræm]	b, h	1	19	2	7		D	L	+
Eight	8	programme	[ˈprəʊgræm]	[ˈprɒgræm]	b, h	12	5	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		7	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		8	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		9(2)	2	10	2	D	L	+
					b, h		10	2	5	2	D	L	+
					b, h		11(2)	2	14		D	L	+
					b, h		12	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		13	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		14	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		15	2	7		D	L	+
					b, h		10	2	7		D	L	+
Eight	8	local	[ˈlɒkəl]	[ˈlɒkəl]	b, c	2	11	2	7		D	L	-
					b, c		27	1	7		M	L	-
Six	6	easy	[eɪz]	[æz]	b	1	27	1	7		M	L	
Six	6	take	[teɪk]	[fɛk]	b, h	1	28	2	5	2	M	L	
Six	6	Malaysians	[məˈleɪʒənz]	[məˈleɪʒənz]	b	1	18	1	1	6	M	L	+
Six	6	area	[ˈɛəriə]	[ˈɛəriə]	a, b	2	11	2	7		D	L	+
					a, b		15	2	7		D	L	
Six	6	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋk]	c, d	1	13	2	7		M	L	
Eight	8	think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋk]	c, d	2	12	2	7		M	L	
					c, d		18	2	7		M	L	
Six	6	three	[θri:]	[tɪri:]	c	7	5	1	2	5	M	L	
					c		14	1	7		M	L	
					c		18	1	5	2	M	L	

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Ult. No.	No. of Error	Fr. of lists' th h	Int. R: -h --h	Syn. sc. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W P/L L. S L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Six	6	thirty	['θɜːtɪ]	['tɜːtɪ]	c		20	1	7		1	M	L	
Six	6	anything	['enɪθɪŋ]	['enɪθɪŋ]	c		23	1	6			M	L	
Six	6	everything	['evriθɪŋ]	['evriθɪŋ]	c	1	25(2)	1	14			M	L	
Six	6	them	['seɪm]	['dem]	c,c	1	10	2	7			D	L	-
Six	6	them	['seɪm]	['dem]	c	1	26	1	7			P	L	+
Eight	8	them	['seɪm]	['dem]	c	1	29	1	7			P	L	+
Six	6	they	['seɪ]	['de]	b,c	4	1	1	7			M	F	
					b,c		10	1	4	3	1 2	M	F	
					b,c		2	2	7			M	F	
					b,c		4	2	7			M	F	
					b,c		23	2	7			M	F	
					b,c		24	2	7			M	F	
					b,c		15	2	7			M	F	
Eight	8	they	['seɪ]	['de]	b,c	1	4(2)	1	14			M	F	
Six	6	then	['seɪn]	['den]	c	3	16	1	7			M	F	
					c		12	1	7			M	L	
Six	6	there	['ðeə]	['deə]	c	2	13	1	5	2		M	L	
					c		14	1	7			M	L	
Eight	8	there	['ðeə]	['deə]	c	1	22	1	7			M	F	
Six	6	that	['ðæt]	['dæt]	c	3	24	1	7			M	F	
					c		27	1	6		1	M	L	
Eight	8	that	['ðæt]	['dæt]	c	4	14(2)	1	14			M	F	
					c		15	1	7			M	F	
Six	6	the	['ðə]	['də]	c	5	18	1	7			M	F	
					c		16	1	7			M	F	
					c		19(2)	1	14			M	F	
					c		22	1	7			M	F	
					c		24	1	7			M	F	
Eight	8	the	['ðə]	['də]	c	3	11	1	7			M	F	
					c		12	1	7			M	F	
					c		13(2)	1	14			M	F	
Six	6	seven	['sevn]	['sevn]	c	1	5	1	1	5	1 5	D	L	+
Six	6	very	['veri]	['veri]	c	1	19	1	7			D	L	+
Eight	8	very	['veri]	['veri]	c	1	15	1	7			D	L	+
Six	6	TV	['ti:vi:]	['ti:vi:]	a,c,h	3	14	3	7			D	L	+

Int. No.	S. No.	Word	RP	Mispronunciation	Error type	No. of occ.	Utt. No.	Error type	Fr. of lists: +h h -h --h	Syn. ac. of unint. R: Fr. of -h, --h W L. P/L L. S L.	Sy. T. of words: M/D/P-sy.	Gr. T. of words: L/F	Stress Error
Eight	8	TV	[ˈti:vi:]	[ˈtɪvi:]	a,c,h	18	3	3	7		D	L	+
					a,c,h	20	3	3	7		D	L	+
					a,c,h	6	7	3	7		D	L	+
					a,c,h	9	9	3	6	1	D	L	+
					a,c,h	12	12	3	7		D	L	+
					a,c,h	13	13	3	7		D	L	+
					a,c,h	14	14	3	7		D	L	+
					a,c,h	15	15	3	7		D	L	+
Six	6	television	[ˈtɛlɪvɪʒən]	[ˈtɛlɪvɪʒən]	a,c,h	1	21	3	7		P	L	+
Six	6	developing	[dɪˈvɛləpɪŋ]	[dɪˈvɛləpɪŋ]	a,c	1	11	2	7		P	L	+
Eight	8	interesting	[ˈɪntrəstɪŋ]	[ˈɪntrəstɪŋ]	a	3	9	1	4	2	P	L	+
					a		12	1	5	1	P	L	+
					a		20	1	2	5	P	L	+
Eight	8	interested	[ˈɪntrəstɪd]	[ˈɪntrəstɪd]	a	2	13	1	4	3	P	L	+
					a		15	1	5	2	P	L	+
Six	6	miles	[ˈmaɪlz]	[ˈmaɪs]	e	1	10	1	7		M	L	
Six	6	town	[taʊn]	[ˈtəʊn]	h	1	10	1	7		M	L	
Eight	8	ten	[ten]	[ˈtɛn]	h	1	16	1	2	5	M	L	
Eight	8	time	[taɪm]	[ˈtɪm]	h	1	18	1	4	3	M	L	
Six	6	two	[tu:]	[ˈtʊ:]	h	5	8	1	7		M	L	
					h		19	1	7		M	L	
					h		21	1	7		M	L	
					h		24	1	6	1	M	L	
					h		28	1	5	2	M	L	
Six	6	quite	[kwɪt]	[ˈkwɪt]	h	2	9(2)	1	14		M	L	
Eight	8	quite	[kwɪt]	[ˈkwɪt]	h	2	21(2)	1	10	4	M	L	
Eight	8	crowded	[ˈkraʊdɪd]	[ˈkɹəʊdɪd]	a,h	1	18	2	6	1	M	L	+

Appendix E (1) Utterances with syntactic errors which were mostly rated +h

Int. No.	Utt. No.	Utterance	Error type	No. of errors	Degree of int.	Frequency	Ethnic group
One	15	When I in K.L.	1	1	+h	7	C
One	18	When I visitings my relatives	1	1	+h	7	C
One	24	I majoring Chemistry	1/11	2	+h	7	C
Three	15	When I small, I don't know...	1/2	2	+h	7	C
Six	22	That is depend on er...	1	1	+h	7	I
Six	6	Until now I have no problem	2	1	+h	7	I
Ten	19	Previously I am doing just in the (aid section)	2/12	2	+h	7	M
Ten	21	And then after that I am doing the juvenile cases	2/12	2	+h	7	M
Ten	23	And then I am doing the prostitution side also	2/12	2	+h	7	M
One	23	Oh, I haven't think of it	3	1	+h h --h	4 2 1	C
One	19	So far I haven't see a beaches...	3/10	2	+h	7	C
Six	19	Most of the programmes er... can say not very nice	4/11	2	+h	7	I
Ten	24	When they caught in hotels	4	1	+h	7	M
Three	17	What I see and what I heard	5	1	+h -h	6 1	C
Two	6	Sometimes very difficult	6	1	+h	7	C
Six	3	How many people in my family	6	1	+h	7	I
Two	7	Because many students need this book ah, so difficult to find la	6	1	+h	7	C
Ten	17	I think not so much different	6	1	+h	7	M
Ten	30	Depend	6	1	+h	7	M
Ten	35	So very difficult for them...	6	1	+h --h	6 1	M
Six	15	In my area, can	7	1	+h	7	I
Seven	12	So will make me more freely to... mix with people	7 15	2	+h	7	M
Nine	8	I think sometimes go to the cinema	7	1	+h	7	C

Int. No.	Utt. No.	Utterance	Error type	No. of errors	Degree of int.	Frequency	Ethnic group
Nine	10	Most of the time go to (tanjung)	7	1	+h --h	5 2	C
Two	13	Sport...sport ...I watch it	7	1	+h	7	C
Four	6	Muar they got, they got a (bridge) ha	8/11/16	3	+h	7	C
Four	8	In Muar they, they have also a er... what er (tanjung)	8/10/1	3	+h --h	6 1	C
Six	4	And then...they ask to see (forms) and then jokes	9/13	2	+h	7	I
Nine	6	Muar don't have...	9	1	+h	7	C
Five	13	May be...one to six month	10	1	+h	7	M
Six	21	Just only I spend two hours or one hours watching television	10/12/17	3	+h -h --h	4 2 1	I
Two	12	I think...Mon...Monday la	11	1	+h	7	C
Five	10	So I fail my (TOEFL) for last time	11	1	+h	7	M
Six	25	We cannot comment the Channel Three	11/13	2	+h	7	I
Six	26	So we cannot comment anything about that	11	1	+h	7	I
Seven	8	We will be sent to overseas...	11	1	+h	7	M
Seven	16	Otherwise we will be handicap... in our conversation with the foreign countries	11	1	+h	7	M
Seven	17	But before that, I had been here for one month 1980	11	1	+h	7	M
Seven	19	Under the sponsored by my department	11/14	2	+h	7	M
One	16	Every time you g you feel so (low) walking in the street la.	12	1	+h	7	C
Four	9	A resort where people will spend their leisure times there	10/12	2	+h	7	C
Six	28	Still I feel nervous to contact...	12	1	+h --h	5 2	I
Ten	41	I think children section is more interesting rather than prostitution	12	1	+h	7	M
Two	9	The most time I am in library	13/15	2	+h	7	C
Two	9	I find the English book very difficult	13	1	+h	7	C

Int. No.	Utt. No.	Utterance	Error type	No. of errors	Degree of int.	Frequency	Ethnic group
Four	13	This is first time I have been	13	1	+h	7	C
Six	11	And nowadays Kampar is under deve oping area	11/13	2	+h	7	I
Six	13	I think in a few years, we will have the factories (over there)	13	1	+h	7	I
Ten	2	For last two years	13	1	+h	7	M
One	17	Not unlike K.L.	14	1	+h --h	4 3	C
Eight	17	Four of us, included me	14	1	+h	7	I
Ten	13	Everything has to rush in, is it	14	1	+h h	4 3	M
Ten	34	They have not enough education	14	1	+h	7	M
One	21	Asking all the things like that	16	1	+h -h --h	5 1 1	C
One	8	And got children playground	16	1	+h	7	C
Six	27	I can't say like that	16	1	+h -h	6 1	I
Nine	9	Because Muar got five cinema	16/10	2	+h	7	C

(NB Words in parentheses were not taken into consideration)

Total number of utterances: 57

Total number of syntactic errors: 79

Appendix E 2) Utterances with syntactic errors which were mostly rated -h or - h

Int. No.	Utt. No.	Utterance	Error type	No. of errors	Degree of int.	Frequency	Ethnic group
One	7	The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park	1/13	2	--h	7	C
Five	3	Now I in charge the media production	1	1	-h	7	M
Five	4	I in charge the Foundation Science for government	1/11/13	3	-h --h	6 1	M
Three	13	Because already in university, then cannot speak English very well	1/7/7	3	+h -h --h	1 5 1	C
Seven	7	I want to be proficient...because	7	1	+h -h --h	2 4 1	M
Three	12	Then feel very ashame	7	1	+h -h --h	1 1 5	C
Two	2	And for the games er...a bit only la	1/7/11/13	4	-h --h	1 6	C
Seven	15	Has to act more or less like a ambassador of Malaysia	7/13	2	+h -h --h	1 3 3	M
Ten	9	And about the...the traffic in K.L. also jam	9/12	2	-h	7	M
One	9	At time there was a zoo inside la, but they are close some	9/14/15	3	-h --h	1 6	C
One	17	Penang is a pleasure and then...has beaches to go	11/13/15	3	-h	7	C
Ten	21	Whereby dealing in courts ah	11	1	--h	7	M
Seven	4	No. Administrative.	14	1	+h --h	2 5	M
Five	9	I think I want to do my future study in my Master	15	1	+h -h	2 5	M
One	19	So so la	16	1	--h	7	C
Nine	5	Around like that	16	1	--h	7	C
Nine	14	But the seaside compare to the Penang one..	16	1	+h --h	2 5	C
Ten	38	That one because I am not so deeply...	14/16	2	-h --h	2 5	M
Six	18	For Malaysians ah for all must need another channel	17	1	-h --h	5 2	I
Four	7	Can, can said, can be, can said it very known in Malaysia la	4 17 18	3	--h	7	C
Two	6	Some books ah...got fews only	14 16	3	-h	7	C

Int. No.	Utt. No.	Utterance	Error type	No. of errors	Degree of int.	Frequency	Ethnic group
Four	18	And then home home ah, at home ah... it is horrible	17/18	2	-h --h	1 6	C
Ten	6	The life in town areas and as well if compared to often the rural people	12/12/15	3	h -h --h	1 5 1	M
Three	14	Not very well, also very poor la and can, cannot communicate with person la	7/12/18	3	-h --h	6 1	C
Three	18	Er...I don't...with, within this week ah within this two week ah...we mostly have programme, programme la	10/12/15/18	4	-h --h	3 4	C
Three	17	Now, now er...after secondary feel what I see and what I heard ah, then I found English very important	5/7/14/18	4	-h	7	C
Four	1	English is is important because er...in Malaysia, there are, they are people, they are a lot of people	6/18	2	-h --h	4 3	C
Ten	26	Because...it's how...the way how the...	18	1	+h --h	3 4	M
Ten	37	I mean to have meds, I mean medical test you know for those prostitutes	14/18	2	+h -h --h	1 5 1	M

Total number of utterances: 29

Total number of syntactic errors: 60

Appendix E (3) Utterances with lexical errors rated +h, h, -h or --h

Int. No.	Utt. No.	Utterance	Errors related to meaning/ grammar	No. of errors	Degree of int.	Frequency	Ethnic group
Two	11	I must <u>find</u> the er...dictionary	meaning	1	+h --h	6 1	C
Three	14	And cannot communicate with <u>person</u>	meaning	1	+h --h	6 1	C
Four	21	We <u>make</u> (i) one room as <u>sleeping</u> (ii) room	meaning	2	(i)+h (ii)-h --h	7 2 5	C
Four	7	Can said it very <u>known</u> in Malaysia	meaning	1	-h --h	1 6	C
Six	25	Because Channel Three is er...is only <u>purpose</u> for commercial	meaning	1	--h	7	I
Eight	18	I don't think that it is easy to study <u>also</u>	meaning	1	+h --h	2 5	I
Eight	18	It is crowded and <u>study</u> time is...	meaning	1	+h --h	4 3	I
Nine	9	One or two is force to close <u>up</u> already	meaning	1	--h	7	C
Ten	19	Previously I am <u>doing</u> just in the aid section	meaning	1	+h	7	M
Ten	21	After that I am <u>doing</u> the juvenile cases	meaning	1	+h	7	M
Ten	23	And then I am <u>doing</u> the prostitution side	meaning	1	+h	7	M
Three	16	I don't know the <u>able</u> to know English	grammar	1	+h --h	5 2	C
Seven	11	I think the <u>medium of language</u> will be English	grammar	1	+h	7	M

Total number of utterances: 13

Total number of lexical errors: 14

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners'		Responses		No. of Occurrence	Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem.	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	Unhearing' of word/ phrase/clause	Unhearing' of whole Uttr.					
5	Er..... Some.... there are some place er.... like the D.R. Park and the Perak er....	'D.R.' heard as 'Deer' 'D.R.' heard as 'Beer'	Perak Perak Like the D.R. Park and the Perak		4 2 1	-h -h -h	No shared knowledge (1)	discourse	
6	San Poh Tong and then swimming pools Kinta swimming pool and er....	'Kinta' heard as 'indoor'	San Poh Tong Kinta		7 6 1	-h -h -h	No shared knowledge (1)	discourse	
7	No, the D.R. Park. The D.R. is stand for the builder of the Park, Doctor Seenivasagam la.	'builder' heard as 'future'	D.R.; The D.R. is stand for; Doctor Seenivasagam builder; D.R.; Doctor Seenivasagam	+	1 1 5	--h --h --h	No shared knowledge (1)	discourse	
9	At time there was a zoo [su:] inside, but they are close some la because of lack [iɛŋ] of fund.	'lack' heard as 'let'	zoo	+	1 6	-h --h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 9, 14, 15	syntactic	
10	And 'padang' there, not many places to go la.	"padang" there' heard as 'down there'	and 'padang' there		1 6	-h -h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse	
14	The air [e] here are not so.....		air	+	4 2	-h --h	Phonological error: air [e] (E.T. a)	segmental	
15	When I in K.L., I feel the air [e] around K.L. is so tense [tens] la.	'tense' heard as 'dense'	air air; tense air		2 2 2	-h -h -h	Phonological errors. (i) air [e] (E.T. a); (ii) tense [tens] (E.T. h)	segmental	
16	Every time you go you feel so low [lo:] walking in the street la.	'low' heard as 'lonely'	low		1 1	-h -h	Phonological error: low [lo:] (E.T. b)	segmental	
17	Not unlike K.L. la, Penang is a pleasure [pleʔə] and then..... has beaches [biʔəs] to go.	'pleasure' heard as 'fashion' 'pleasure' heard as 'fresher' 'pleasure' heard as 'fresh air'; 'beaches' heard as 'pictures'	pleasure; not unlike not unlike K.L. la; pleasure		1 2 1 2 1	-h -h -h -h -h	a) Phonological errors: i) pleasure [pleʔə] (E.T. c); ii) beaches [biʔəs] (E.T. a) b) Syntactic error: E.T. 14	segmental/ syntactic	
19	So far I haven't see a beaches, any spot beaches la.... so so la.	'spot' heard as 'spoiled' 'any spot' heard as 'unspoiled'	so so la spot; so so la		1 5	-h -h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 3, 10, 15, 16	syntactic	

Utt. No	Utterance	Listeners'			Responses		No. of Occurrence	Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of words/phrases/ clause.	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/clause	'Unhearing' of whole Utt.						
1	Interview Three (Subject 3) You mean my village ah?			+			7	--h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
2	Er Just a Malay village [wilety] la. Very small.	'Just a Malay village' heard as: 'This is a place in Malaysia': 'It's in Malaysia'.	Just : village Just a Malay village la				1 1 1 4	-h -h -h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
6	Jobs? Er....Mostly they are rubber tapper [tɛpə] [tɛpə]	'rubber tapper' heard as: 'agriculture', 'vegetables', 'jungles', 'rubble double'	rubber tapper				1 2 1 1 2	-h -h -h -h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
7	Then, some of them are.....paddy [pɛdi] er.....paddy [pɛdi].....	'paddy' heard as 'partly'	paddy				1 6	-h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
11	Because I am very poor [pə] in English la.	'poor' heard as 'bored' 'poor' heard as 'fond of'					1 1	-h -h	Phonological error: poor [pə] (E.T.h)	segmental
12	Then feel very ashame [ɔjəm] er....		ashame	+			1 5	-h --h	a) Syntactic errors: E.T. 7, 12 b) Discourse factor: cohesive link error	syntactic/ discourse
13	Because already in university, then cannot speak English very well.		because already in university then	+			5 1	-h --h	a) Syntactic error: E.T. 1, 7, 12 b) Discourse factor: cohesive link error	syntactic/ discourse
14	Not very well, also very poor la and can, cannot communicate with person la.	'Not very well' heard as 'not only that'	Not very well, also very poor la.	+			2 4 1	-h -h --h	a) Syntactic error: E.T. 1, 7, 12 b) Discourse factor: cohesive link error	syntactic/ discourse
16	Er.... when I small, I don't know the able to know English.	'able to know' heard as 'ordinary'	able to know				1 1	-h -h	a) Syntactic errors: E.T. 1, 2, 15 b) Lexical error: 'able'	syntactic/ lexical
17	Now, now er....after secondary, feel, what I see and what I heard er....then I found English very important.	'after secondary feel' heard as 'after studying here' 'heard' heard as 'hear' 'secondary' heard as 'ordinary'	after secondary, feel after secondary, feel				1 1 1 4	-h -h -h -h	Syntactic errors : 5, 7, 10	syntactic
18	Er....I don't....with, within this week ah, within this two week ah....we mostly have programme, programme la.	'We mostly have programme', programme la' heard as 'we made up a programme'.	Within this two week we mostly have programme, programme la.	+			1 1 1 4	-h -h -h --h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 10, 12, 15, 18	syntactic

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners' responses			No of Occurrence	Degree of Int.	Possible cause of the int. problem.	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of words/phrase/ clause.	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/ clause	'unhearing' of whole Utt.				
20	Other than the Orientation Week I enjoy it la.		Other than the Orientation Week	+	6 1	-h --h	No shared knowledge(2)	discourse
21	The senior [sɪnɪə] are so..... they are so chil.... fussy er... asking all the things like that.		senior senior; like that		3 1	-h -h	No shared knowledge(2)	discourse
22	Not, not really. But they just keep bothering [bədɪtɪŋ] us la, asking questions, silly questions.	'bothering' heard as 'wondering' 'bothering' heard as 'ordering'			1 1	-h -h	Phonological error: bothering[bədɪtɪŋ] (E.T. c)	segmental
23	Oh, I haven't think [tɪŋ] of it.		think		1	-h	Syntactic error: E.T. 3	syntactic
25	I minor in Management I will minor in Management.			+	4	--h	Phonological error: tone grouping.	Suprasegmental
26	So I think I am going into the Management [menet'men]field [fild] la.		management field		2 2	-h -h	Phonological errors. management [menet'men] (ET b,c,d), (ii)field (fild) (E.T. a)	Segmental
1	Interview Two (Subject 2) Oh! I think I study much[mʌtʃ] in library [laɪbrə'ri] la.	'much' heard as 'maths'.	library much in library		1 4 2	-h -h --h	(a) Phonological errors: (i)much [mʌtʃ] (E.T. a) (ii)library [laɪbrə'ri] (E.T. c) (b) Lexical error: 'much'	Segmental/ Lexical
2	And for the games (game) er.... a bit only la.	'game' heard as 'ink'		+	1 6	-h --h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 1, 7, 12, 13	Syntactic
3	Sir you mean service [ə'svɪs]?	'service' heard as 'studies'		+	1 1	-h --h	Phonological error: stress error on 'service'	Suprasegmental
6	Sometimes very difficult la because some books ah..... got fews only [ɒnl]	'er... got fews only' heard as 'are not usually'. 'got fews' heard as 'produced' 'got fews' heard as 'confused'	only only got few only		1 1 1 4	-h -h -h -h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 6, 14, 16	Syntactic
11	I must find the.....er.....dictionary [dɪʃənə'ri]..... a long time.	'dictionary' heard as 'decent early' 'dictionary' heard as 'decent?'	dictionary	+	1 1 3 1	-h -h -h --h	a) Phonological errors: dictionary [dɪʃənə'ri] (ET.c, e,) b) lexical error: 'find'	segmental/ lexical
12	Er...I think...Mon...Monday la.	'la' heard as 'last'.			1	-h	No shared knowledge(3)	discourse
13	Sport, sport I watch it....football and er... some badminton [bædmɪntən]	'some badminton' heard as 'something with them'.	badminton		1 5	-h -h	Phonological error: stress error on 'badminton'	suprasegmental

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners' responses				Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/clause	'Unhearing' of whole Utt.	No of occurrence			
20	I am in 'Desa Cahaya'		Desa Cahaya		7	--h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
1	Interview Four (Subject 4) English [ɪŋɡlɪʃ] is important because er...in Malaysia, there are they are people, they are a lot of people.		English is important; there are, they are In Malaysia; there are, they are, they are a lot of	+	2 4 1	--h -h -h	Phonological error: English [ɪŋɡlɪʃ] (E.T.c) b) Syntactic error. E.T. 6, 18	segmental/ syntactic
2	Er...their language [lɪŋɡwɛtʃ] their spoken [spɒkən] language [ɛŋɡwɛtʃ] that means er...if we want to talk with them or communicate with them.		language; their spoken language their spoken language		5 2	-h -h	Phonological errors (i) language [ɪŋɡwɛtʃ] (E.T. a, c) (ii) spoken [spɒkən] (E.T. b)	segmental
3	We have to use English [ɪŋɡlɪʃ] or else [es]	'English' heard as 'linguist' 'or else' heard as 'a lot'	or else		1 1 1	-h -h -h	Phonological errors: (i) English [ɪŋɡlɪʃ] (E.T.c); (ii) else [es] (E.T. e)	segmental
6	But Muar is quite famous because Muar they got, they got a bridge [brɪdʒ] ha.	'bridge' heard as 'rich' 'bridge' heard as 'richer'			1 2	h -h	Phonological error: bridge [brɪdʒ] (E.T. c)	segmental
7	Er....can, can said, can be, can said it very known it Malaysia la.	'can said' heard as 'can sit' 'very known' heard as 'very normal'		+	1 6	--h --h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 4, 17, 18	syntactic
8	Er....In Muar, they they have also a er.... what.... a 'tanjung'	'tanjung' heard as 'banjo'	tanjung		2 4 1	h -h --h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
10	And er....Muar, actually Muar is not a big town [taun] la but....		town		3	-h	Phonological error: town [taun] (E.T.h.)	segmental
15	What? 'Desa'?		Desa		7	--h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
18	And then home home ah, at home ah...it is horrible		it is horrible	+	1 6	-h --h	Syntactic errors: E.T. 17, 18	syntactic
19	Here la, here. 'Sungei Dua' la.		Sungei Dua	+	3 4	-h --h	No shared knowledge(3)	discourse

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners'			responses		No of occurrence	Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem.	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase"clause	'Unhearing' of whole Utt.						
20	Er...120. Actually, we rent [den] the two room [dvm] la.	'room' heard as 'door'	rent rent, room		1 2 3	--h --h --h	Phonological errors: (i) rent [den] (E.T.c.) (ii)room [dvm] (E.T.c)	segmental		
21	But... we make one room [dvm] as sleeping [slɪpɪŋ] room [dvm], sleeping [slɪpɪŋ] room [dvm] and one room [dvm] as study room [dvm].	'sleeping' heard as 'sitting'	sleeping room as sleeping room, sleeping room and one room as	+	2 1 3 1	-h -h -h --h	Phonological errors: (i) room [dvm] (E.T.c) (ii)sleeping [slɪpɪŋ] (E.T. a)	segmental		
22	So, one room [dvm], two room [dvm]... one, one of them we pay for it, we pay we pay...		room	+	3 1	-h --h	Phonological error: room [dvm] (E.T. c)	segmental		
23	We rent [den] the room [fvm] for..... we rent [den] the room [fvm]... 120 for one room [dvm] and the other we pay 135.	'rent' heard as 'dent'; 'room' heard as 'doom' 'we rent the room' heard as 'we dent the phone'	rent, room we rent the room rent the room for 120 for one room	+	1 1 2 1 1 1	-h -h -h -h -h --h	Phonological error: (i) rent [den] (E.T c) (ii) room [fvm] (E.T. c)	segmental		
1	Interview Five (Subject 5) Er...Development [diwelopmən] studies in [soʊs] Science[səɪns]	'development' heard as 'government' 'development' heard as 'diplomatic' 'development' heard as 'diploma'	Social Science Social Science development; Social Science		2 2 1 2	-h --h --h --h	a)Phonological errors: development[diwelopmən] (E.T. a,c,d.) (ii) social [soʊs] (E.T b,c.c.) (ii) science [saɪns] (E.T.e) b)No shared knowledge (2)	segmental/ discourse		
2	Now...so far...now I in charge [tʃəʒ] the media production [prɒdʌkʃən] for the off campus student.	'in charge' heard as 'just' 'in charge' heard as 'interest' 'I in charge' heard as 'I'm interested in'.	off-campus off campus, media production off campus in charge, off-campus		3 1 1 2	-h -h -h -h	a)Phonological errors charge [tʃəʒ] (E.T. a,c) b)No shared knowledge (2)	segmental/ discourse		
4	And for the first July I in charge [tʃəʒ] the Foundation [faʊn'deɪʃən] Science [saɪns] for Government.	'in charge' heard as 'just' 'Foundation Science' heard as 'Political Science'	in charge; Foundation in charge; Foundation Science for Government	+	1 1 2 2 1	-h -h -h -h --h	a)Phonological errors: (i)charge [tʃəʒ] (E.T. a,c.) (ii)Foundation [faʊndeɪʃən] (E.T. a,c) b) No shared knowledge (2)	segmental/ discourse		
8	Because I... I think I am very poor in English especially in spoken [spəkn].		spoken especially in spoken		1 1	-h --h	Phonological error: spoken [spəkn] (E.T. b)	segmental		
9	Because in my future, I think I want to do my future study in my master.	'want to do my future study in my master' heard as 'want to be a doctor'	my master my future study in my master		1 3 1	--h -h -h	Syntactic error:E.T. 15	syntactic		

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners' responses			No of occurrence	Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem.	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/Clause	'Unhearing' of whole Utt.				
10	So I fail my TOEFL [tɒfəl] for last time.	'TOEFL' was heard 'topple'	'TOEFL'		1 6	-h --h	No shared knowledge (1)	discourse
12	I think so. But next year the off-campus send me to Vancouver of Candada for the course.		off-campus Vancouver of Candada for the course		5 1	-h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
4	Interview Six (Subject 6) And then....they ask to see forms [fɔrms] and then jokes.		forms		1 2	-h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
5	'Desa Permai', 357	'357' heard as 'three block down'	Desa Permai Desa Permai	+	1 1 5	--h -h --h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
13	Er... I think in a few years, we will have the factories over [pʊə] there [dɜ]	'over there' heard as 'all there'	over there		1 2	-h -h	Phonological errors:(1) over [pʊə] (E.T. a,c); (ii) there [dɜ] (E.T. c)	segmental
15	Ya. In my area [ɛrɪə], can.	'my area' heard as 'America'			1	-h	Phonological error: area [ɛrɪə] (E.T. a,b)	segmental
16	Er...The Hotel [hɒtəl] and then some more... Mag...Magnum and one...Knight Rider.	'Knight Rider' heard as 'Mad Tiger' 'Hotel' heard as 'hotter'	The Hotel Malaysia		1 4 2	-h -h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
18	For Malaysian ah, for all must need another channel like TV3	'Malaysian' heard as 'missionary'			1 4 2	-h -h --h	No shared knowledge (1)	discourse
21	No. Just only [ɒnli] I spend two hours or one hours watching television.		just only	+	3	-h	Syntactic error: 10, 12, 17	syntactic
23	Because if we don't, they don't like the channel three [tri]	'Channel Three' heard as 'territory'			1	-h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
24	That means they can change to Channel Two or One.	'Channel Two or One' heard as 'another territory'			1	-h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
25	We cannot comment the Channel Three because Channel Three is er....is only purpose [pʊps] for commercial.		purpose is only purpose for commercial.		1 6	-h -h	Lexical error: 'purpose'	lexical

Utt No	Utterance	Listeners' responses			No. of occurrence	Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word / phrase / clause	'Unhearing' of word / phrase / clause	'Unhearing' of whole Utt.				
27	Er....I can't say like that.	'like that' heard as 'right now'			1	-h	Syntactic Error: E.T. 16	syntactic
28	Still I feel nervous [nɔʊəs] to contact seniors [si:nɪə] and most probably I take two or one month for.....	'seniors' heard as 'CBS' 'seniors' heard as 'serious'	nervous nervous, seniors	+	1 1 1 1 2	-h -h -h -h --h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
2	<u>Interview Seven (Subject 7)</u> Yes. Sponsored by the Department.	'department' heard as 'government'			2	-h	Discourse factor : no 'coherence'	discourse
3	The MARA.		department MARA		1 7	-h --h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
4	No. Administrative.		administrative		5	--h	Syntactic error: E.T. 14	syntactic
6	I want to improve my spoken [spɔkən] English	'Spoken' heard as 'broken'	spoken		1 2	-h -h	Syntactic error: spoken [spɔkən] (E.T. b)	segmental
7	I want to be proficient [prɒfɪʃən].	'proficient' heard as 'professor'	proficient	+	1 3 1	-h -h --h	Phonological errors: Proficient [prɒfɪʃən] (E.T. a, c)	segmental
9	In MARA student affairs.		MARA, affairs MARA, student	+	1 2 4	--h --h --h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
15	Has to act more or less like a ambassador [æmˈbæsədɜ] of Malaysia.	'ambassador' heard as 'visitor'	ambassador of Malaysia	+	1 2 3	-h -h --h	a)Phonological error: ambassador [æmˈbæsədɜ] (E.T. f) no shared knowledge (1)	segmental/ discourse
1	<u>Interview Eight (Subject 8)</u> Mass Communication [kɒmjʊnɪkəʃən].	'Communication' heard as 'congregation'	Mass	+	1 1 3	--h --h --h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
2	Any job in Mass Communication [kɒmjʊnɪkəʃən] field [fild]	'Mass Communication' heard as 'school teaching' 'Mass Communication' heard as 'teaching'	Mass; field		1 1 2	-h -h -h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
9	Its different is in TV3 programmes [prɒɡræm] they are putting very interesting programme [prɒɡræm].	'programme' heard as 'problem'	Its difference is; they are putting interesting	+	1 2 1	-h -h --h	Phonological error: tone grouping	suprasegmental

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners' responses				Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/Clause	'Unhearing' of whole Utt.	No of occurrence			
10	Whereas in RTM most of them are local programmes		whereas in RTM most of them	+	1 2	-h --h	a) phonological error: tone grouping b) No shared knowledge (1)	suprasegmental/ discourse
12	I think the TV3 programmes are really interesting [intə'restɪŋ].		interesting		1 1	-h -h	Phonological error: stress error on 'interesting'	suprasegmental
13	And the majority of the population in Malaysia are interested [intə'restəd] in watching the TV3 programmes.		interested		1 2	-h -h	Phonological error: stress error on 'interested'	suprasegmental
15	It shows that they are very interested [intə'restəd], you see, in TV3 programme.		interested		2	-h	Phonological error: stress error on 'interested'	suprasegmental
16	I am living in Desa Swasta, Block 10, Room number 3.		Desa Swasta, Block 10, Room number 3 Desa Swasta		5 2	-h -h	No shared knowledge (3)	discourse
18	Yes. It is crowded and study time is..... I don't think that it is easy to study also [p'eo]		it is crowded; also study time; also also		1 3 1	-h -h -h	a) Syntactic error: E.T. 14, 18 b) Lexical error: 'also'	syntactic/ lexical
20	So far the Orientation Week is so interesting [intə'restɪŋ].		interesting	+	1 4	-h --h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
21	The seniors [si'nɪəz] are quite, they are quite friendly.		seniors	+	2 2	-h --h	No shared knowledge (2)	discourse
5	Interview Nine (Subject 9) Around like that.			+	7	--h	Syntactic error: E.T. 16	syntactic
6	And then Muar....Muar don't have much recreation [rɪk'reɪʃən].		recreation		1 6	-h -h	Phonological error: recreation [rɪk'reɪʃən] (E.T. a, b,)	segmental
9	Because Muar got five cinema, one or two is force to close up already, only three left.		is force to close up one or two is force to close up already		1 4 2	-h -h -h	lexical error: 'up'	lexical
10	Most of the time go to 'tangjung'		tanjung	+	5 2	-h --h	No shared knowledge(3)	discourse
11	'Tanjung' I think 'tanjung' is quite okay la.		tanjung	+	3 4	-h --h	No shared knowledge(3)	discourse

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners' responses			No of occurrence	Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of whole utterance				
14	But the seaside compare to the Penang one is nothing [nə'tiŋ].	'is nothing' heard as 'I think'	the Penang one is nothing		1 5	-h -h	syntactic error: E.T. 16	syntactic
6	Interview Ten (Subject 10) The life in town areas and as well if compared to often the rural people.	'often the rural' heard as 'often the river' 'as well if compared' heard as 'is very competitive'.	in town area and as well often the rural people	+	1 1 2 1 1	-h -h -h -h -h	syntactic error:E.T. 12, 12, 15	syntactic
9	And about the the traffic in K.L. also [p'so] jam.	'also' heard as 'is so' 'also jam' heard as 'is jailed'			6 1	-h -h	syntactic error: E.T. 1, 11	syntactic
19	Yes. Previously, I am doing just in the aid [ed] section ['seʒən].	'aid section' heard as 'eat session' 'section' heard as 'session'	aid aid aid section		1 2 1 2	-h -h -h -h	Phonological errors: (i) aid [ed] (E.T. b); (ii) section ['seʒən] (E.T. e)	segmental
20	Just giving aid [eds] to the poor [pva] people.	'poor' heard as 'four'	aid aid aids, poor	+	1 4 1 1	-h -h -h -h	phonological errors: (i) aid [eds](ETb) (ii) poor [pva] (E.T.h.)	segmental
21	And then after that I am doing the juvenile cases whereby dealing in courts ah.		dealing in courts		6	-h	syntactic error: E.T. 11	syntactic
22	Helping [heptɪ] all the juvenile delinquency and.....		helping		6	-h	phonological error: tone grouping	suprasegmental
24	Helping [heptɪ] those underage arrested by police when they caught in hotels and so on.		helping those underage		7	-h	phonological error: tone grouping	suprasegmental
25	Er...just by....to establish [es'etʃɪs] their moral and then give counselling to them, to rehabilitate [rɪhɪlɪtət] themselves.		rehabilitate establish, rehabilitate		5 2	-h -h	phonological errors: (i)rehabilitate [rɪhɪlɪtət] (ii) establish [es'tetʃɪs] (ET a,b,f) (ii) establish[es'tetʃɪs] (ET a,c)	segmental
26	Yes. I think so, because.....it's how..... the way how the		it's howthe way how the	+	3 1	-h -h	syntactic error: E.T.18	syntactic
27	I mean their participation ah, in their family side as well as the girl's side.		the girl's side		2	-h	phonological error: voice quality (voice trailing off)	suprasegmental

Utt. No.	Utterance	Listeners' responses			Degree of int.	Possible cause of the int. problem	Level at which the int. problem occurred
		Mishearing of word /phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of word/ phrase/ clause	'Unhearing' of whole utterance			
29	We must talk about religious things [tɪys] and so on and must make full use of them.	'religious things' heard as 'readjusting', 'religious things' heard as 'adjusting'			-h -h -h --h	phonological errors: things [tɪys] (E.T. c); voice quality (voice trailing off)	segmental/ suprasegmental
33	Whereas if they work and then they feel [fɪl]	'they feel' heard as 'in the field'	and then they feel	+	-h -h --h	syntactic error: ET 12	syntactic
35	So very difficult for them to survive.	'to survive' heard as 'to go back'	to survive		-h -h --h	phonological error: voice quality (voice trailing off)	suprasegmental
36	Yes, I think so. But I mean.... you must have the certificate.		I mean you must have the certificate But I mean you must have the certificate	+	-h -h -h	phonological error: voice quality (voice trailing off)	suprasegmental
37	I mean to have meds I mean medical test, you know, for those prostitutes.		meds; you know for those prostitute for those prostitutes		-h -h --h	phonological errors: (i) tone grouping (ii) voice quality (voice trailing off)	suprasegmental
38	That one because I am not so deeply in.....	'deeply in' heard as 'agree'		+	-h --h	Discourse factor: no cohesion	discourse
40	Because when I went to K.L., I choose I have chosen this children section [seʃən].	'section' heard as 'session'			-h	phonological error: session [seʃən] (E.T. e)	segmental
41	I think children section [seʃən] is more interesting rather than prostitution and so on.	'section' heard as 'session'			-h	phonological error: session [seʃən] (E.T. e)	segmental
42	Because children section [seʃən] you can help these people, you know the abandon child and so on.	'section' heard as 'session'			-h	phonological error: session [seʃən] (E.T. e)	segmental

APPENDIX G (1)Listening TestPart One

Listen to the following pairs of words. Are they the same (S) or different (D)? Delete the inappropriate answer.

eg peep/pip (S/D)

- (a) S/D
- (b) S/D
- (c) S/D
- (d) S/D
- (e) S/D

Part Two

Listen to the following groups of words. (1) Write them down as you hear them; (2) Number the box that is beside the sentence where each word should belong.

eg	<u>Words</u>		<u>Sentence</u>
	1. pin	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">1</div>	She bought a hair_____.
	2. bin	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">4</div>	_____ is a strong alcoholic drink.
	3. kin	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">2</div>	Put the rubbish in the_____.
	4. gin	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">3</div>	His next of _____ is his uncle.
A.	1.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	Please put a _____ of sugar in the tea.
	2.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	I _____ he'll come.
	3.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	Put all those words in a neat_____.
	4.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	I'll be kind to her _____ she decides to leave me.
B.	1.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	They worship him like a _____.
	2.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	They _____ with sorrow.
	3.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	The flowers have been _____.
	4.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	She paints very _____.
C.	1.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	She's _____ for student artists.
	2.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	She's _____ to pluck some flowers.
	3.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	His head looks _____ nowadays.
	4.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"></div>	He was a coward but seems to be _____ now.

- D. 1. The adventurous boys are _____ up the stream.
 2. His trousers are _____ at the knees.
 3. He's _____ for forgiveness.
 4. The hawker's _____ along the road.
- E. 1. The president is _____ the meeting.
 2. She _____ quite well in the examination.
 3. The cat has been _____.
 4. The crowd was _____ the marvelous performance.
- F. 1. The criminal was _____ last night.
 2. He _____ his finger accidentally.
 3. The baby is sleeping in the _____.
 4. There's a _____ for display.
- G. 1. Please _____ it up.
 2. Please _____ it there.
 3. How long can he _____?
 4. The young plant has _____.
- H. 1. The leaders _____ to their members.
 2. The police are going to _____ the club.
 3. Have you _____ the table?
 4. It's a _____ film.
- I. 1. This _____ will lead you to the main road.
 2. He was _____ to respect the old.
 3. This is just _____ of your exercise.
 4. He was _____ to be intelligent.
- J. 1. The windscreen _____ must be used on rainy days.
 2. The mountain was covered with _____ of clouds.
 3. It's very dangerous to catch a _____.
 4. There was _____ over their misfortunes.
- K. 1. The child was blowing _____ bubbles.
 2. A lion lives in a _____.
 3. The child was climbing up the _____.
 4. He wasn't there _____.

- L. 1. ☐ He regreted to have committed all those ____.
2. ☐ The bomb ____ the city to the ground.
3. ☐ I haven't seen him ____ 1975.
4. ☐ We ____ the sick woman to hospital.
- M. 1. ☐ The ____ has been drinking again.
2. ☐ This skirt is too ____ for you.
3. ☐ This is a ____ of vegetable.
4. ☐ He fired a ____ at the man.
- N. 1. ☐ He has ____ money of us all.
2. ☐ They have signed the ____ for occupying the house.
3. ☐ There is a ____ on smoking in cinemas.
4. ☐ The newly formed ____ has been very popular.
- O. 1. ☐ We've got to cross these mountain ____.
2. ☐ The soldier received a ____ from his captain.
3. ☐ He can't enjoy all his ____ because he is very ill.
4. ☐ This postman delivered a ____ of letters this morning.

Part Three

- A. Listen to the following pairs of words. Are they the same (S) or different (D)? Delete the inappropriate answer.

eg concert[kɒnsə't]-- concert[kən's :t] S/D

Answers

1. S/D
2. S/D
3. S/D
4. S/D
5. S/D

- B. Listen to the stress patterns of the words in each pair. Are they the same (S) or different (D)? Delete the inappropriate answer.

eg 'kitchen - 'brother S/D
'only - a'way S/D

Answers

1. S/D
2. S/D
3. S/D
4. S/D
5. S/D

- C. Listen to the following groups of words and mark their loudest (ie heaviest) syllables.

eg or'ganic; 'organism; organi'zation

1. politics; political; politician
2. democratic; democracy; democrat
3. personality; personify; personal
4. hypocritical; hypocrite; hypocrisy
5. photographic; photographer; photograph

- D. Listen to the following pairs of sentences. Do they sound the same (S) or different (D)? Delete the inappropriate answer.

eg 'We flew in a jet. - We flew in a 'jet. S/D

Answers

1. S/D
2. S/D
3. S/D
4. S/D
5. S/D

- E. Listen to the following sentences and underline the loudest (ie heaviest) stressed word.

eg The teacher protested at the schoolboy's conduct.

1. The manager ordered a thorough investigation.
2. Lena was asking her mother to accompany them.
3. The recommended procedure is intended to be followed.
4. The investigator decided that the policemen should be suspended.
5. Our window need cleaning again.

- F. Listen to the following pairs of sentences. Do they sound the same (S) or different (D)? Delete the inappropriate answer.

eg It's Jane that wants to dance.

It's Jane/that wants to dance. S/D

Answers

1. S/D
2. S/D
3. S/D
4. S/D
5. S/D
6. S/D

G. Listen to the following pairs of sentences. Do they sound the same (S) or different (D)? Delete the inappropriate answer.

eg He might do it for₁ me. - He might do it for₂ me. S/D

He might do it for₁ me. - He might do it for₂ me. S/D

Answers

1. S/D
2. S/D
3. S/D
4. S/D
5. S/D

Part Four: Listening comprehension

There are three kinds of book owners. The first has all the standard sets and best sellers— unread, untouched. (This deluded individual owns woodpulp and ink, not books.) The second has a great many books— a few of them read through, most of them dipped into, but all of them as clean and shiny as the day they were bought. (This person would probably like to make books his own, but is restrained by a false respect for their physical appearance.) The third has a few books or many— every one of them dog-eared and dilapidated, shaken and loosened by continual use, marked and scribbled in from front to back. (This man owns books.)

Is it false respect, you may ask, to preserve intact and unblemished a beautifully printed book, an elegantly bound edition? Of course not. I'd no more scribble all over a first edition of Paradise Lost than I'd give my baby a set of crayons and an original Rembrandt! I wouldn't mark up a painting or a statue. Its soul, so to speak, is inseparable from its body. And the beauty of a rare edition or of a richly manufactured volume is like that of a painting or a statue.

But the soul of a book can be separated from its body. A book is more like the score of a piece of music than it is like a painting. No great musician confuses a symphony with the printed sheets of music. Arturo Toscanini reveres Brahms, but Toscanini's score of the C-minor Symphony is so thoroughly marked up that no one but the maestro himself can read it. The reason why a great conductor makes notations on his musical scores— marks them up again and again each time he returns to study them— is the reason why you should mark your books. If you respect

for magnificent binding or typography in the way, buy yourself a cheap edition and pay your respects to the author.

Why is marking up a book indispensable to reading? First, it keeps you awake. (And I don't mean merely conscious; I mean wide awake.) In the second place, reading, if it is active, is thinking, and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The marked book is usually the thought-through book. Finally, writing helps you remember the thoughts you had, or the thoughts the author expressed. Let me develop these three points.

If reading is to accomplish anything more than passing time, it must be active. You can't let your eyes glide across the lines of a book and come up with an understanding of what you have read. Now an ordinary piece of light fiction, like say, Gone with the Wind, doesn't require the most active kind of reading. The books you read for pleasure can be read in a state of relaxation, and nothing is lost. But a great book, rich in ideas and beauty, a book that raises and tries to answer great fundamental questions, demands the most active reading of which you are capable. You don't absorb the ideas of John Dewey the way you absorb the crooning of Frank Sinatra. You have to reach for them. That you cannot do while you're asleep.

If, when you've finished reading a book, the pages are filled with your notes, you know that you read actively. The most famous active reader of great books I know is President Hutchins, of the University of Chicago. He also has the hardest schedule of business activities of any man I know. He invariably reads with a pencil, and sometimes, when he picks up a book and pencil in the evening, he finds himself, instead of making intelligent notes, drawing what he calls "caviar factories" on the margins. When that happens, he puts the book down. He knows he's too tired to read, and he's just wasting time.

Circle the correct answers:

1. As the books of the first kind of book owners are unread and untouched, the owners only own
 - (a) words and letters, not books.
 - (b) wood-craft and ink, not books.
 - (c) wood-worm and ink, not books.
 - (d) woodpulp and ink, not books.

- (2) The third kind of book owners really own books because all their books are
- (a) dog-eared and dilapidated through continual use.
 - (b) dog-eared and dilapidated through disuse.
 - (c) dot-smearred and dilapidated through continual use.
 - (d) marked and ruined through disuse.
3. The reason why you should mark your books is the same as why
- (a) a great author makes notations on his word scores.
 - (b) a great conductor makes notations on his musical scores.
 - (c) a great conductor makes quotations on his musical scores.
 - (d) a great musician makes quotations on his musical scales.
4. A great book requires
- (a) reading in a state of relaxation.
 - (b) reading passively.
 - (c) reading actively.
 - (d) reading to pass time.
5. The most famous active reader known to the speaker is
- (a) President Aitkins.
 - (b) President Hutchins.
 - (c) President Hutchinson.
 - (d) President Aitkinson.

Appendix G (2)An Analysis of the Listening Test for Malaysian University Students
Conducted in March 1985 at the Centre for Languages and Transla-
tion, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Number of subjects : 57

Ethnic group composition : 36 Malays (63%)
18 Chinese (32%)
3 Indians (5%)

Time allowed : One hour

The Test comprises four parts:

Part One

The subjects were required to identify whether phonemes in the minimal pairs below were identical or different.

<p>(a) ^z ^s rise / rice</p> <p>Mean score: 66.7%</p> <p>MS in terms of ethnic group:</p> <p>Malay: 61.1%</p> <p>Chinese: 72.2%</p> <p>Indian: 100%</p>	<p>(b) ^m ^p lamb / lamp</p> <p>Mean score: 72.6%</p> <p>MS in terms of ethnic group:</p> <p>Malay: 66.7%</p> <p>Chinese: 88.9%</p> <p>Indian: 66.7%</p>
<p>(c) ^ʒ ^{i:} first / feast</p> <p>Mean Score: 84.2%</p> <p>MS in terms of ethnic group:</p> <p>Malay: 83.3%</p> <p>Chinese: 83.3%</p> <p>Indian: 66.7%</p>	<p>(d) ^{i:} ^{i:} leap / leap</p> <p>Mean Score: 87.7%</p> <p>MS in terms of ethnic group:</p> <p>Malay: 83.3%</p> <p>Chinese: 100%</p> <p>Indian: 66.7%</p>
<p>(e) ^{eI} ^e date / debt</p> <p>Mean Score: 86.0%</p> <p>MS in terms of ethnic group:</p> <p>Malay: 80.5%</p> <p>Chinese: 94.4%</p> <p>Indian: 100%</p>	

- Findings: (i) Order of difficulty in identifying phonemes
(from difficult to easy):
/s/ and /z/ — voiceless/voiced phonemes
/eI/ and /e/, /ɜ/ and /i:/, /m/ and /p/ — different phonemes
/i:/ and /i:/ — identical phonemes
- (ii) mean score in Part One: 79.3%
- (iii) mean score in terms of ethnic group:
Chinese (87.8%), Indian (80.0%), Malay (74.9%)

Part Two

The subjects were required to write down groups of words, in minimal pairs, as they heard them. Sentences (with blanks) were provided to help subjects to select correct words and eliminate phonologically identical ones. The phonemes chosen were problem phonemes of Malaysian students.

A.	I list	e lest	I bit	e bet
Mean score:	82.5%	15.8%	64.9%	17.5%
MS in terms of ethnic groups:				
Malay	80.6%	13.9%	63.9%	19.4%
Chinese	88.9%	22.3%	66.7%	16.7%
Indian	100%	100%	66.7%	0%

Findings: (i) Subjects had more problems with /e/ than with /I/.

(ii) There was confusion between /I/ and /i: eg

'bit' was heard 'beat' : No. of occ. Ethnic group

6 M (6)

(iii) There was confusion between /e/ and /æ eg

No. of occ. Ethnic group

'bet' was heard 'bag' 1 M (1)

'bat' 3 M (1), C (2)

'bad' 2 M (2)

'that' 4 M (1), C(2), I(1)

'lat' 1 C (1)

(iv) Consonant clusters /st/ was heard /s/ eg

No. of occ. Ethnic group

'lest' was heard 'less' 27 M 17) C(10)

B	eI Wail	e Well	e Sent	eI Saint
Mean score:	15.8%	75.4%	89.5%	36.8%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	16.7%	77.8%	88.9%	33.3%
Chinese	11.1%	66.7%	88.9%	44.4%
Indian	33.3%	100%	100%	100%

Findings: (i) There was more confusion between /eI/ and /I/ than between /eI/ and /e/ eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>
'Wail' was heard 'will'	13	M(7), C(6)
'Saint' was heard 'sing'	6	M(5), C(1)
'sink'	6	M(5), C(1)
'sin'	1	M(1)
'sint'?	2	M(1), C(1)
and		
'Wail' was heard 'well'	7	M(4), C(3)
'Saint' was heard 'sent'	2	M(2)
'send'	3	M(1), C(2)

(ii) There was confusion between /eI/ and /i:/ eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>
'Wail' was heard 'wheel'	7	M(6), C(1)

(iii) There was confusion between /t/ and /d/ in final positions. eg

	<u>No of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>
'Sent' was heard 'send'	14	M(9), C(5)

(iv) Replacement with phonologically identical words. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>
'Whale' was heard 'wail'	8	M(7), I(1)

(v) /eI/ constituted more problems than /e/.

C	^{əʋ} bolder	^ɔ balder	^{əʋ} posing	^ɔ - pausing
Mean score:	15.8%	0%	68.4%	19.3%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	22.2%	0%	72.2%	19.4%
Chinese	0%	0%	55.6%	27.8%
Indian	33.3%	0%	100%	0%

Findings: (i) There was confusion between /əʋ/ and /ɔ:/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'bolder' was heard 'broader'	3	C(3)
'boarder'	2	M(1), C(1)
'balder'	1	M(1)
'border'	6	M(4), C(2)
'balder' was heard 'bolder'	13	M(11), C(1), I(1)
'boulder'	4	M(4)
'bowl'	1	M(1)

(ii) There was confusion between /əʋ/ and /b/ eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'bolder' was heard 'bother'	10	M(7), C(3)
'bottle'	2	M(2)

(iii) Replacement with phonologically identical words. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'pausing' was heard 'porsing'?	5	M(5)
'poursing'?	6	M(3), C(3)

(iv) /ɔ / constituted more problems than /əʋ/.

D	æ paddling	e peddling	e begging	æ bagging
Mean score:	47.4%	10.5%	49.1%	28.1%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	63.9%	16.7%	47.1%	36.1%
Chinese	16.7%	0%	55.6%	16.7%
Indian	33.3%	0%	33.3%	0%

Findings: (i) There was confusion between / æ / and / e / eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'peddling' was heard	'paddling'	18	M(12), C(5), I(1)
	'padding'	1	C(1)
	'packing'	1	M(1)
	'pad'	1	M(1)
	'battling'	1	C(1)
	'patling'?	1	M(1)
	'paddleling'?	1	M(1)
'begging' was heard	'bagging'	3	M(3)
	'backing'	3	M(3)
	'backging'?	2	M(2)

E	ɛə fared	e fed	ɛə chairing	I cheering
Mean score:	3.5%	14.0%	52.6%	75.4%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	2.8%	11.1%	44.4%	72.2%
Chinese	5.6%	22.2%	72.2%	83.3%
Indian	0%	0%	66.7%	66.7%

Findings: (i) There was more confusion between / e / and / æ / than between / e / and / ɛə / eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'fed' was heard	'fat'	27	M(15), C(11), I(1)
	'fad'	5	M(5)
and 'fared' was heard	'fed'	3	M(2), C(1)

(ii) There was also confusion between / ɛə / and / æ / eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'fared' was heard	'fat'	17	M(12), C(7), I(1)
	'fad'	3	M(2), C(1)

- (iii) There was confusion between /d/ and /t/ in final positions. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'fed' was heard 'fat'	27	M(20), C(6), I(1)

- (iv) Replacement with phonologically identical words. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'fared' was heard 'faired'?	3	M(2), C(1)

F	^a cart	[^] cut	^b cot	^ɔ caught
Mean score:	5.3%	77.2%	1.8%	26.3%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	0%	83.3%	0%	16.7%
Chinese	16.7%	61.1%	5.6%	38.7%
Indian	0%	100%	0%	66.7%

- Findings: (i) There was confusion between /a:/ and /ɔ:/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'cart' was heard 'caught'	22	M(15), C(6), I(1)
'court'	3	M(3)
'cord'	1	I(1)

- (ii) There was confusion between /b/ and /ɔ:/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'cot' was heard 'caught'	23	M(17), C(5), I(1)
'court'	4	M(1), C(2), I(1)

- (iii) Confusion between /b/ and /a/ or /^/ was not significant. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'cot' was heard 'cart'	1	C(1)
'cut'	2	M(2)

- (iv) There was confusion between /t/ and /d/ in final positions. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'cart' was heard 'card'	6	M(5), C(1)
'caught' was heard 'cord'	2	M(2)

- (v) /^/ did not seem to be a problem phoneme.

G	i: leave	I live	I lift	i: leafed
Mean score:	54.4%	40.4%	52.6%	0%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	52.8%	38.9%	47.2%	0%
Chinese	55.6%	44.4%	61.1%	0%
Indian	66.7%	33.3%	100%	0%

Findings: (i) There was considerable confusion between /i:/ and /I/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'leave' was heard 'live'	3	M(2), C(1)
'lift'	7	M(4), C(3)
'lit'	1	C(1)
'leafed' was heard 'lift'	14	M(11), C(1), I(2)
'lifted'	1	M(1)
'live'	7	M(6), C(1)
'lived'	2	C(2)
'live' was heard 'leave'	11	M(6), C(5)
'leaved'	1	M(1)
'leaf'	5	M(4), C(1)
'lift' was heard 'leaf'	3	M(2), C(1)
'leaved'	1	M(1)
'least'	1	M(1)
'left'?	1	M(1)

(ii) There was confusion between /f/ and /v/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'leave' was heard 'lift'	7	M(6), C(1)
'leaf'	5	M(4), I(1)
'live' was heard 'leaf'	5	M(4), C(1)
'lift'	2	M(1), C(1)
'lift' was heard 'live'	3	M(2), C(1)
'leafed' was heard 'leave'	4	M(4)
'live'	7	M(6), C(1)

H	r raid	l laid	r horror	l hollor
Mean score:	31.6%	38.6%	61.4%	5.3%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	22.2%	41.7%	66.7%	5.6%
Chinese	44.4%	33.3%	44.4%	5.6%
Indian	66.7%	33.3%	100%	0%

Findings: (i) Subjects had very little problem discriminating
/r/ from /l/. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'raid' was heard 'lead'	1	M(1)
'laid' was heard 'raid'	1	C(1)
'horror' was heard 'hollow'	1	M(1)

(ii) The problems lay in discriminating between /eI/
and /e/, /t/ and /d/. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'raid' was heard 'red'	9	M(6), C(3)
'read'	12	M(10), C(2)
'laid' was heard 'lead'	6	M(6)
'led'	1	C(1)
'laid' was heard 'late'	15	M(10), C(4), I(1)

I	θ thought	t taught	θ path	t part
Mean score:	8.8%	38.6%	33.3%	52.6%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	5.6%	36.1%	27.8%	44.4%
Chinese	5.6%	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%
Indian	33.3%	0%	0%	66.7%

Findings: (i) there was more confusion between / θ / and /f/
than between / θ / and /t/. eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'thought' was heard	'fought'	15	M(11), C(4)
	'fourth'	5	M(5)
	'forth'	4	M(3), C(1)
	'fault'	3	M(1), C(2)
	'fort'	2	M(1), C(1)
	'force'	1	C(1)
	'folk'	1	C(1)
	'ford'	1	M(1)
	'fod'?	2	M(1), C(1)
	'fout'?	2	M(1), C(1)
'path' was heard	'puff'	2	M(2)
	'puf'?	1	M(1)
	'paf'?	1	M(3)
	'purf'?	3	M(2), C(1)
	'parf'?	1	M(1)
	'pouf'	1	M(1)
	'palf'?	1	C(1)
and			
'thought' was heard	'taught'	3	M(3)
	'talk'	1	M(1)
	'tough'	1	C(1)
'path' was heard	'fault'	1	M(1)
	'part'	1	C(1)
	'thought'	1	C(1)
	'taught'	1	C(1)
'taught' was heard	'thought'	9	M(5), C(1), I(3)

- (11) There was confusion between /t/ and /k/ in final positions. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'taught' was heard 'talk'	10	M(9), C(1)
'folk'	1	C(1)

J	w a wail	v a veil	w wiper	v viper
Mean score:	7.1%	1.8%	56.1%	28.1%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	11.1%	2.8%	61.1%	27.8%
Chinese	0%	0%	50.0%	33.3%
Indian	0%	0%	33.3%	0%

Findings: (1) /v/ was heard as /w/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'a veil' was heard 'a whale'	3	M(1), C(1), I(1)
'away'	2	M(1), C(1)
'a well'	5	M(3), C(2)
'a wheel'	1	M(1)
'a weal'	1	M(1)
'a wail'	4	M(3), I(1)
'a wale'?	1	M(1)
'viper' was heard 'wiper'	17	M(7), C(7), I(3)
'wider'	1	C(1)
'whipper'	2	M(2)
'wifer'?	2	M(2)
'wipper'?	1	M(1)
'wisper'?	1	M(1)

(ii) /w/ was heard as /v/ on four occasions:

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'a wail' was heard 'avail'	1	M(1)
'wiper' was heard 'viper'	1	C(1)
'vapour'	2	M(2)

(iii) There was confusion between /eI/ and /e/

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'a wail' was heard 'a well'	10	M(9), C(2)
'a whell'? 1	1	M(1)
'a wail' was heard 'a wheel'	1	M(1)
'a weal'	1	M(1)
'a wail' was heard 'a will'	3	C(3)

(iv) Replacement with phonological identical words. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'avail' for 'a veil'	11	M(9), C(2)
'a vale' for 'a veil'	3	M(3)

K	d den	ð then	d ladder	ð lather
Mean score:	10.5%	54.4%	36.8%	1.8%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	8.3%	52.8%	36.1%	0%
Chinese	11.1%	50.0%	38.9%	5.6%
Indian	33.3%	100%	33.3%	0%

Findings : (i) There was confusion between /d/ and /ð/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'den' was heard 'then'	16	M(10), C(5), I(1)
'than'	3	M(2), C(1)
'there'	1	M(1)
'ladder' was heard 'lather'	5	M(1), C(4)
'leather'	5	M(4), C(1)
'lether'?	4	M(1), C(3)
'lather' was heard 'ladder'	2	C(1), I(1)

(ii) There was confusion between /ð/ and /v/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'lather' was heard 'lever'	13	M(10), C(3)
'leaver'	6	M(5), I(1)
'level'	13	M(3), C(10)
'lover'	1	M(1)
'larva'	1	C(1)
'liver'	1	M(1)
'laver'?	2	M(2)
'leva'?	1	M(1)

(iii) There was confusion between /ð/ and /d/ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'lather' was heard 'ladder'	2	C(1), I(1)
'lador'?	1	C(1)

(iv) /ð/ in medial position constituted more problem than in initial position.

L	s	z	s	z
	since	sins	raced	razed
Mean score.	61.4%	15.8%	19.3%	0%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	63.9%	16.7%	27.8%	0%
Chinese	61.1%	11.1%	0%	0%
Indian	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	0%

Findings: (i) /s/ and /z/ were not heard in final positions. eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'since' was heard	'sin'	1	C(1)
	'seen'	2	M(2)
	'sink'	3	M(1), C(2)
	'seem'	1	M(1)
	'sint'?	2	M(1), C(1)
'sins' was heard	'sent'	1	M(1)
	'seen'	3	M(2), I(1)
	'send'	3	M(2), C(1)
	'sing'	1	M(1)
	'sink'	2	M(2)
	'seem'	1	M(1)
	'sane'	1	C(1)
	'sincere'	1	M(1)
	'sain'?	1	C(1)

(ii) There was confusion between /s/ and /z/. eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'sins' was heard	'sinks'	2	C(2)
	'since'	10	M(7), C(3)

(iii) /st/ was heard /s/ or /z/. eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'raced' was heard	'raise'	11	M(7), C(3), I(1)
	'race'	10	M(9), I(1)

(iv) Replacement with phonologically identical words. eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'raist'?	for 'raced'	5	M(2), C(2), I(1)

M	ʃ short	s sort	ʃ shot	s sot
Mean score:	71.9%	31.6%	31.6%	3.5%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	66.7%	36.1%	33.3%	2.8%
Chinese	77.8%	27.8%	16.7%	5.6%
Indian	100%	0%	100%	0%

Findings: (i) /s/ was usually heard /ʃ/ . eg

		<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'sort' was heard	'shot'	2	M(1), C(1)
	'shorter'	1	I(1)
	'shoot'	1	M(1)
	'shout'	2	M(1), C(1)
	'short'	2	M(1), C(1)
	'shock'	1	C(1)
	'shoft'?	1	M(1)
	'shorted'?	1	M(1)
	'shore'	1	M(1)
'sot' was heard	'shot'	4	M(2), C(2)
	'shock'	2	M(2)
	'shoot'	1	C(1)
	'shouted'	1	M(1)
	'shout'	1	M(1)
	'short'	1	M(1)
	'shoker'?	1	M(1)

(ii) /ʃ/ was only heard /s/ on three occasions:

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'shot' was heard 'salt'	1	C(1)
'sort'	1	M(1)
'sork'?	1	C(1)

(iii) there was confusion between /b/ and /ɔ./ . eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'short' was heard 'shot'	3	M(3)
'shock'	1	M(1)
'shot' was heard 'short'	21	M(13), C(8)
'shorted'?	3	M(2), C(1)

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'sot' was heard 'sought'	7	M(6), I(1)
'shore'	1	M(1)
'sore'	1	M(1)
'sort'	7	M(6), C(1)
(iv) Replacement with phonologically identical words. eg		
	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'sought' for 'sort'	7	M(5), C(1), I(1)

N	st least	s lease	nd band	n ban
Mean score:	19.3%	14.0%	21.0%	29.8%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	16.7%	16.7%	22.2%	27.8%
Chinese	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%
Indian	33.3%	0%	0%	33.3%

Findings: (i) There was confusion between /st/ and /s/. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'lease' was heard 'least'	8	M(3), C(5)
'least' was heard 'lease'	3	M(2), C(1)

(ii) There was confusion between /i:/ and /I/. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'least' was heard 'list'	34	M(22), C(10), I(2)
'listed'	2	M(2)
'lease' was heard 'list'	16	M(13), C(3), I(1)
'listed'	2	M(2)
'lists'	1	I(1)
'liss'?	2	M(2)
'lise'?	1	C(1)

(iii) There was confusion between /nd/ and /n/. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'band' was heard 'bin'	1	M(1)
'ban'	4	M(3), C(1)
'van'	3	M(2), C(1)
'ben'	3	M(3)
'ten'	1	C(1)
'pen'	2	M(1), C(1)
'ban' was heard 'bend'	9	M(5), C(3), I(1)

(iv) There was confusion between /æ/ and /e/. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'band' was heard 'ben'	3	M(3)
'bend'	3	M(1), C(1), I(1)
'then'	3	M(3)
'ten'	1	C(1)
'pen'	2	M(1), C(1)
'tend'	1	C(1)
'went'	1	C(1)
'bent'	2	M(1), C(1)
'ban' was heard 'bend'	9	M(5), C(3), I(1)
'bent'	5	M(3), C(2)

O.	dʒ ridges	tʃ riches	tʃ batch	dʒ badge
Mean score:	8.8%	61.4%	35.1%	17.5%
MS in terms of ethnic group:				
Malay	11.1%	55.6%	38.9%	19.4%
Chinese	5.6%	72.2%	27.8%	11.1%
Indian	0%	66.7%	33.3%	33.3%

Findings: (i) /dʒ/ was heard /tʃ/ but not vice versa. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'ridges' was heard 'reaches'	5	M(2), C(3)
'reached'	1	M(1)
'richest'	3	M(1), C(1), I(1)
'riches'	1	C(1)
'badge' was heard 'batch'	10	M(6), C(4)
'beach'	1	M(1)
'patch'	5	M(4), I(1)

(ii) There was confusion between /p/ and /b/ in initial positions. eg

	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
'badge' was heard 'patch'	5	M(4), I(1)
'batch' was heard 'patch'	3	M(2), C(1)
'path'	1	M(1)
'patches'	1	I(1)
'pass'	1	M(1)
'pach'?	1	M(1)

General comments on Part Two

(i) Mean score of Part Two in terms of ethnic group:

Indian (38.3%), Chinese (32.8%), Malay (32.4%)

(ii) Order of difficulty in terms of vowel phonemes (from most difficult to least difficult):

	<u>Mean score</u>
ʊ	1.8%
ɑ	5.3%
ɔ.	18.3%
eɪ	26.3%
i:	27.2%

	<u>Mean score</u>
ɛɔ	28.1%
e	35.8%
æ	37.8%
əʊ	42.1%
I	60.1%
Iɔ	75.4%
ʌ	77.2%

(ii) Order of difficulty in terms of consonant phonemes and consonant cluster (from most difficult to least difficult)

	<u>Mean score</u>
z	7.9%
dʒ	13.2%
v	19.3%
nd	21.0%
θ	21.1%
l	21.9%
d	23.7%
s	24.0%
ʒ	26.0%
n	29.8%
w	31.6%
t	45.6%
r	46.5%
t	48.2%
ʃ	51.8%

- (iii) Subjects had more difficulty differentiating vowel phonemes than consonant phonemes.
- (iv) Subjects had considerable difficulty discriminating long/short vowels and voiced/voiceless consonants.
- (v) Subjects had more difficulty identifying voiced consonants than their voiceless counterparts.
- (vi) Confusion between /st/ and /s/, /nd/ and /n/ was more significant in Malay and Chinese subjects than in Indian subjects.
- (vii) Confusion between /w/ and /v/ was more significant in Indian subjects than in Malay and Chinese subjects.

Part Three

This part of test comprises a wide range of tests on word stress, tonic syllables and intonation.

A. Word Stress (1)

The subjects were required to detect whether stress fell on the same/different syllable of pairs of words composed of same/different parts of speech of the same words.

1. 'combat / combat	2. subject / subject
Mean score: 92.9%	Mean score: 89.5%
MS in terms of	MS in terms of
ethnic group:	ethnic group:
Malay 91.7%	Malay 86.1%
Chinese 94.4%	Chinese 94.4%
Indian 100%	Indian 100%
3. 'transport / transport	4. 'insult / insult
Mean score: 73.7%	Mean score: 43.9%
MS in terms of	MS in terms of
ethnic group:	ethnic group:
Malay 66.7%	Malay 19.4%
Chinese 88.9%	Chinese 94.4%
Indian 33.3%	Indian 33.3%
5. alternate / 'alternate	
Mean score: 94.7%	
MS in terms of	
ethnic group:	
Malay 94.4%	
Chinese 94.4%	
Indian 100%	

Mean score of Word Stress (1) : 78.9%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	71.7%
Chinese	93.3%
Indians	73.3%

- Findings: (i) The overall performance of Chinese subjects was better than that of Malay and Indian subjects.
- (ii) Subjects had more difficulty identifying stress on pairs of words without any change in vowel quality eg 3 and 4, than those with a change in vowel quality eg 1 and 5.
- [kɒmbæʔt], [kəmbæʔt] and [ɔ.lɪʔz.nəʔt], ['ɔ:lʔneɪt]

B. Word Stress (2)

The subjects were required to detect whether stress fell on the same/different syllables of pairs of words with the same number of syllables.

1. external / 'eatable	2. effective / 'important
Mean score: 45.6%	Mean score: 64.9%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	MS in terms of ethnic group:
Malay 61.1%	Malay 63.9%
Chinese 22.2%	Chinese 66.7%
Indian 0%	Indian 66.7%
3. uncertain / under'go	4. entertain / cigare'tette
Mean score: 70.2%	Mean score: 59.6%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	MS in terms of ethnic group:
Malay 61.1%	Malay 52.8%
Chinese 83.3%	Chinese 72.2%
Indian 66.7%	Indian 66.7%
5. repre'sent / tobac'co	
Mean score: 52.6%	
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay 50.0%	
Chinese 61.1%	
Indian 33.3%	

Mean score of Word Stress (2) : 58.6%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	57.8%
Chinese	61.1%
Indian	46.7%

Findings: The overall performance of Word Stress (2) was significantly weaker than Word Stress (1).

C. Word Stress (3)

The subjects were required to mark the primary stress in a group of words with three or four syllables.

1. 'politics / pol'itical / pol'itician

MS	63.2%	35.1%	22.8%
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MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	52.8%	36.1%	19.4%
Chinese	83.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Indian	66.7%	33.3%	0%

2. dem'ocratic / dem'ocracy / dem'ocrat

MS	57.9%	36.8%	29.8%
----	-------	-------	-------

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	63.9%	36.1%	22.2%
Chinese	44.4%	38.9%	50.0%
Indian	66.7%	33.3%	0%

3. personal'ity / person'ify / 'personal

MS	36.8%	40.4%	56.1%
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MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	27.8%	36.1%	58.3%
Chinese	55.6%	55.6%	55.6%
Indian	33.3%	0%	33.3%

4. hypoc'ritical / 'hypocrite / hypoc'ricy

MS	43.9%	42.1%	47.4%
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MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	38.9%	36.1%	63.9%
Chinese	55.6%	61.1%	66.7%
Indian	33.3%	0%	66.7%

5. photograph¹ic / phot¹ographer / 'photograph

MS	49.1%	31.6%	57.9%
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MS in terms of ethnic group

Malay	50.0%	25.0%	63.9%
-------	-------	-------	-------

Chinese	50.0%	50.0%	55.6%
---------	-------	-------	-------

Indian	33.3%	0%	0%
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Mean score of Word Stress (3) :	43.3%
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MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	42.1%
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Chinese	52.6%
---------	-------

Indian	26.7%
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Findings: (i) Subjects had more difficulty detecting stress in words with different number of syllables than those with the same number of syllables. (cf. Word Stress (2) and Word Stress (3))

(ii) The Indian subjects in particular had problems detecting stress.

(iii) Word by word analysis of errors in terms of ethnic group:

1. 'politics

<u>Errors:</u>	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	10	M(9), C(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	9	M(6),C(2),I(1)
 pol ¹ itical		
Primary stress on first syllable	5	M(4),I(1)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	21	M(11), C(10)
Primary stress on last syllable	8	M(6), C(2)
 pol ¹ itician		
Primary stress on first syllable	10	M(2), I(1)
Primary stress on antepenultimate syllable	1	M(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	39	M(26),C(12)I(1)

2. dem ['] ocratic	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
Primary stress of first syllable	10	M(7),C(3)
Primary stress on antepenultimate syllable	1	M(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	10	M(3),(6),I(1)
. dem ['] ocracy		
Primary stress on first syllable	10	M(4),C(5),I(1)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	22	M(17),C(4),I(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	5	M(2),C(3)
'democrat		
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	4	M(2),C(1),I(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	31	M(20),C(11)
3. pers ['] onality		
Primary stress on first syllable	14	M(10),C(3),I(1)
Primary stress on second syllable	9	M(7),C(1),I(1)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	8	M(6),C(2)
Primary stress on last syllable	3	M(2),C(1)
4. pers ['] onify		
Primary stress on first syllable	8	M(6),C(2)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	10	M(6),C(2),I(2)
Primary stress on last syllable	13	M(8),C(5)
'personal		
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	16	M(10),C(5),I(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	6	M(2),C(3),I(1)

4. hypocr ['] ritical	<u>No. of occ.</u>	<u>Ethnic group</u>
Primary stress on first syllable	8	M(5),C(2),I(1)
Primary stress on second syllable	3	M(3)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	7	M(5),C(2)
Primary stress on last syllable	8	M(4),C(4)
 'hypocrite		
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	9	M(5),C(4),I(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	17	M(11),C(6)
 hypocr ['] isry		
Primary stress on first syllable	5	M(4),C(1)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	14	M(11),C(3)
Primary stress on last syllable	7	M(4),C(3)
 5. photogr ['] aphic		
Primary stress on first syllable	9	M(8),C(1)
Primary stress on antepenultimate syllable	2	M(1),C(1)
Primary stress on last syllable	16	M(8),C(8)
 photogr ['] apher		
Primary stress on first syllable	10	M(8),C(2)
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	21	M(15),C(4),I(2)
Primary stress on last syllable	5	M(3),C(2)
 'photograph		
Primary stress on penultimate syllable	6	M(4),C(2)
Primary stress on last syllable	17	M(9),C(5),I(3)

- (iv) Subjects tended to mark the primary stress on the syllable following the actually stressed syllable.
- (v) More Malay than Chinese and Indian subjects tended to mark the primary stress on the penultimate syllables of words.
- (vi) More Malay and Indian than Chinese subjects tended to mark the primary stress on the first syllables of words.
- (vii) More Chinese than Malay or Indian subjects tended to mark the primary stress on the last syllables of words.

D. Tonic syllables (1)

The subjects were required to detect whether tonic syllables fell on the same/different words in pairs of sentences.

1. That's his DESK — That's HIS desk

Mean score	84.2%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	75.0%
Chinese	100%
Indian	100%

2. Are you COMing? — Are you COMing?

Mean score:	89.5%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	86.1%
Chinese	94.4%
Indian	100%

3. Did he BRING it? — Did HE bring it?

Mean score:	42.1%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	44.4%
Chinese	27.8%
Indian	100%

4. Tell her to LEAVE now. — Tell her to leave NOW.

Mean score: 91.2%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 86.1%

Chinese 100%

Indian 100%

5. My brother hasn't COME. — My brother hasn't COME.

Mean score: 40.4%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 47.2%

Chinese 16.7%

Indian 100%

Mean score of Tonic syllable (1) : 69.5%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 67.8%

Chinese 67.8%

Indian 100%

Findings: (i) Subjects did not seem to have much difficulty detecting tonic syllables.

(ii) The performance of the Indian subjects was excellent.

E. Tonic syllables (2)

The subjects were required to underline the word which carried the tonic syllable in sentences.

1. The manager ordered a thorough investigation.

Mean score: 82.5%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 83.3%

Chinese 83.3%

Indian 66.7%

2. Lena was asking her brother to aCCompany them.

Mean score: 70.2%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 66.7%

Chinese 77.8%

Indian 66.7%

3. The recommended procedure is intended to be F0llowed.

Mean score: 66.7%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 66.7%

Chinese 72.2%

Indian 33.3%

4. The investigator decided that the policemen should be susPENDeD.

Mean score: 63.2%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 69.4%

Chinese 55.6%

Indian 33.3%

5. Our windows need CLEANing again.

Mean score: 75.4%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 69.4%

Chinese 94.4%

Indian 33.3%

Mean score of Tonic syllable (2) : 71.6%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 71.1%

Chinese 76.7%

Indian 46.7%

Findings: The subjects did not seem to have difficulty detecting tonic syllables.

F. Tone group

The subjects were required to decide whether pairs of sentences contained the same/different number of tone groups.

1. He told me everything / honestly.

He told me everything honestly.

Mean score: 57.9%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 47.2%

Chinese 83.3%

Indian 33.3%

2. I saw the man and the woman in black.

I saw the man/and the woman in black.

Mean score: 87.7%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 80.6%

Chinese 100%

Indian 100%

3. I bought three plums and two apples.

I bought three plums and two appleas.

Mean score: 100%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 100%

Chinese 100%

Indian 100%

4. My brother / who lives in New York / is a doctor.

My brother who / lives in New York is a doctor.

Mean score: 82.5%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 75.0%

Chinese 94.4%

Indian 100%

- 5 I need the book which you borrowed yesterday.
I need the book which you borrowed yesterday.

Mean score: 94.8%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	91.7%
Chinese	100%
Indian	100%

6. The children watched the horror film/which was awful.
The children watched the horror film which was awful.

Mean score: 52.6%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	50.0%
Chinese	61.1%
Indian	33.3%

Mean score of 'Tone Group': 79.3%

MS of 'Tone group' in terms
of ethnic group:

Malay	74.1%
Chinese	89.8%
Indian	77.8%

- Findings: (i) The overall performance in this question was good.
(ii) The performance of pairs of sentences with the same number of tone group, ie 3 and 5 was better than those with different number of tone groups ie 1, 2, 4 and 6

G. Intonation

The subjects were required to detect whether pairs of sentences had the same/different intonation contours (tones).

1. He tried a different method — He tried a different method.

(Dive)

(Dive)

Mean score: 87.7%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 80.6%

Chinese 100%

Indian 100%

2. She wants cakes and biscuits. — She wants cakes and biscuits.

(Glide down)

(Glide down)

Mean score: 98.2%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 97.2%

Chinese 100%

Indian 100%

3. His friend is interested in fishing. — His friend is interested in fishing.

(Dive)

(Glide up)

Mean score: 98.2%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 100%

Chinese 100%

Indian 66.7%

4. Mangoes ought to be a lot cheaper. — Mangoes ought to be a lot cheaper.

(Take off)

(Take off)

Mean score: 91.2%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 88.9%

Chinese 94.4%

Indian 100%

5. They're going to have a holiday abroad. — They're going to have a holiday abroad.

(Glide down)

(Dive)

Mean score: 87.7%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 88.9%

Chinese 88.9%

Indian 66.7%

Mean score on 'Intonation': 92.6%

MS on 'Intonation' in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 91.1%

Chinese 96.7%

Indian 86.7%

Findings: (i) The subjects had the best performance in this question.

(ii) The Malay subjects might have a little problem identifying the 'take off' and 'dive' intonation contours.

Part Four

Listening comprehension

The subjects were allowed to listen to the text twice : the first listening was for them to get a general idea of the text and the second listening, for them to answer questions.

There were five multiple-choice questions: three questions were formulated on both phonological and semantic grounds, one on pure phonological and another on semantic grounds.

Question 1: phonological and semantic

Mean score: 36.8%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay 25.0%

Chinese 50.0%

Indian 66.7%

Question 2: phonological and semantic

Mean score:	35.1%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	25.0%
Chinese	38.9%
Indian	0%

Question 3: phonological and semantic

Mean score:	49.1%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	44.4%
Chinese	61.1%
Indian	33.3%

Question 4: semantic

Mean score:	78.9%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	75.0%
Chinese	83.3%
Indian	100%

Question 5: phonological

Mean score:	42.1%
MS in terms of ethnic group:	
Malay	44.4%
Chinese	61.1%
Indian	33.3%

Mean score on Listening Comprehension' : 48.4%

MS in terms of ethnic group:

Malay	44.9%
Chinese	58.9%
Indian	46.7%

Findings: (i) The performance of questions formulated on semantic grounds was better than those formulated on phonological grounds.

(ii) It is believed that phonological elements in questions 1, 2 and 3 affected the overall performance of the subjects.

APPENDIX H : SurveyQuestionnaire

1. (a) Name:
- (b) Place of birth:
- (c) Place of residence (if differs from (b)):
- (d) Mother tongue (in the case of Chinese/Indian, state dialect/
language spoken):
- (e) Names of schools attended: Primary schools
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)Secondary schools
 - (i)
 - (ii)
 - (iii)
- (f) Your university record:
 - (i) School:
 - (ii) Year:
 - (iii) Major subjects (if any):
 - (iv) Minor subjects (if any):

Tick ☒ the appropriate box in all the questions below:

2. How would you rate your spoken English?

Very good ☐
 Good ☐
 Average ☐
 Poor ☐
 Very poor ☐

3. How often do you speak English at home?

Always ☐
 Very often ☐
 Often ☐
 Seldom ☐
 Never ☐

4. How often do you communicate with friends (on a personal or social level) in English?

Always ☐
 Very often ☐
 Often ☐
 Seldom ☐
 Never ☐

5. How often do you speak English in the market? (eg buying and selling things)

Always ☐
 Very often ☐
 Often ☐
 Seldom ☐
 Never ☐

6. (a) How often do you watch English television programmes and/or films?

Very often ☐
 Often ☐
 Seldom ☐
 Never ☐

- (b) How much of these programmes and/or films can you understand?

100% ☐
 75% ☐
 50% ☐
 25% ☐
 0-5% ☐

7. (a) How often do you tune in to English radio programmes?

Very often ☐
 Often ☐
 Seldom ☐
 Never ☐

- (b) How much of these programmes can you understand?

100% ☐
 75% ☐
 50% ☐
 25% ☐
 0-5% ☐

8. (a) Apart from Malaysian English, which variety of English are you more familiar with?

American English ☐

British English ☐

Australian English ☐

Canadian English ☐

Others ☐ (please specify)

- (b) If you were given a chance to follow a spoken English course, which variety of English would you prefer?

Malaysian English ☐

American English ☐

Standard British English ☐

Canadian English ☐

Australian English ☐

Others ☐ (please specify)

- (c) State reasons for your preference.

9. If you were given an opportunity to improve your spoken English, would it for

educational purposes (eg for further studies)? ☐

professional purposes (eg to get promotion)? ☐

social purposes (eg to enlarge your circle of friends)? ☐

personal interest? ☐

Others ☐ (please specify)

(You may tick more than one box)

10. What do you think are the important functions of spoken English in the modern Malaysian society? (You may tick more than one box)

Business within the country ☐

International trade ☐

Education ☐

Government service ☐

Mass media ☐

Others ☐ (please specify)

11. Which of the four skills is more important to you in learning the English language? Number them (from 1 to 4) in the boxes provided in the order of importance. (ie 1—Most important)

Listening skills ☐

Speaking skills ☐

Reading skills ☐

Writing skills ☐

12. Which aspects of English do you think you need to improve to enable you to be more proficient in your spoken English? (You may tick more than one box)

Grammar ☐

Vocabulary ☐

Pronunciation ☐

Idiomatic expressions ☐

13. Which aspects of spoken English do you think you need to improve? (You may tick more than one box)

Vowels/Consonants ☐

Stress ☐

Intonation ☐

General fluency ☐

Feedback from Survey

Total number of subjects : 57

Ethnic group composition : 36 Malays (63%)
 18 Chinese (32%)
 3 Indians (5%)

2. Subjects' self-rating of their spoken English

Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
0(0%)	0(0%)	16(28.1%)	26(45.6%)	15(26.3%)

Subjects' exposure to spoken English3. The use of spoken English at home:

Always	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never
1(1.8%)	0(0%)	3(5.3%)	25(43.9%)	28(49.1%)

4. The use of spoken English with friends:

Always	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never
3(5.3%)	1(1.8%)	9(15.8%)	37(64.9%)	7(13.5%)

5. The use of spoken English in the market:

Always	Very often	Often	Seldom	Never
2(3.5%)	0(0%)	7(12.3%)	40(70.2%)	8(14.0%)

6. Time spent in watching English television programmes and/or films:

Very often	Often	Seldom	Never
9(15.8%)	19(33.3%)	29(50.9%)	0(0%)

Percentages of understanding these programmes and/or films:

100%	75%	50%	25%	0-5%
1(1.8%)	13(22.8%)	22(38.6%)	20(35.1%)	1(1.8%)

7. Time spent in tuning in to English radio programmes:

Very often	Often	Seldom	Never
3(5.3%)	20(35.1%)	30(52.6%)	4(7.0%)

Percentages of understanding these programmes:

100%	75%	50%	25%	0-5%
4(7.0%)	10(17.5%)	22(38.6%)	15(26.3%)	6(10.5%)

Varieties of English

8. (a) Apart from Malaysian English,
 30(52.6%) subjects claimed that they were familiar with
 American English.
 27(47.4%) subjects claimed that they were familiar with
 British English.

- (b) Given an opportunity to follow a spoken English course,
 17(29.8%) subjects would choose to follow Malaysian English,
 14(27.6%) subjects would choose to follow American English,
 26(45.6%) subjects would choose to follow standard British
 English,
 as a 'model' of teaching.

(c) Reasons for the choices

Malaysian English : more familiar; can communicate with
 other Malaysians without difficult;
 feel more comfortable; social/cultural
 identity; national pride.

Standard British English: easy to understand and learn; simpler
 than other varieties; more standard;
 internationally used; useful for
 further studies; is the 'model' taught
 in schools; pronunciation is easier
 to understand; widely heard in
 Malaysia in the mass media. eg tele-
 vision and radio.

American English : more practical; easier to understand;
 facilitate further studies in USA; widely
 spoken on television programmes and films;
 widely spoken around the world.

9. Purpose of improving spoken English:

Educational purposes	Professional purposes	Social purposes	Personal interest
36(24.8%)	39(26.9%)	47(32.4%)	23(15.9%)

10. Important functions of spoken English in Malaysian society:

Business within country	International trade	Education	Government service	Mass media
34(18.7%)	38(20.9%)	42(23.1%)	29(15.9%)	39(21.4%)

11. Order of importance in the four language skills:

Order of importance	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
1	12(21.0%)	37(65.0%)	6(10.5%)	2(3.5%)
2	24(43.6%)	10(18.2%)	7(12.7%)	14(25.5%)
3	11(20.4%)	5(9.3%)	24(44.4%)	14(25.9%)
4	7(13.0%)	5(9.3%)	18(33.3%)	24(44.4%)

12. Aspects of English subjects needed to improve to be more proficient in spoken English:

<u>Grammar</u>	<u>Vocabulary</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>	<u>Idiomatic expressions</u>
47(28.8%)	51(31.3%)	45(27.6%)	20(12.3%)

13. Aspects of spoken English subjects wished to improve:

<u>Vowels/Consonants</u>	<u>Stress</u>	<u>Intonation</u>	<u>General fluency</u>
31(22.6%)	31(22.6%)	29(21.2%)	46(33.6%)

APPENDIX I (1)General objectives of the Spoken English courses (Intermediate and Advanced Spoken English):

- (i) to meet the needs and requirements of students who wish to acquire fluency in spoken English. eg those who are planning to further their studies in English-speaking countries, and those whose future professions require a high level of proficiency in spoken English.
- (ii) to build up students' confidence in speaking in formal and informal occasions. eg attending conferences, everyday conversation.
- (iii) to equip students with the appropriate rhetoric and diction which are characteristics of the spoken language as opposed to the written language.
- (iv) to familiarise students with the structures and linguistic conventions of English used in oral activities for particular situations.
- (v) to incorporate speaking skills with listening skills.

Specific objectives of Intermediate Spoken English

- (i) to train students to acquire a good command of standard British English (or RP) or near RP, and be understood by native speakers of English.
- (ii) to enable students to converse more fluently, effectively and freely in English with correct pronunciation and syntax.
- (iii) to provide students with exercises in the kind of language used in everyday situations and increase the command of vocabulary essential in spoken discourse.
- (iv) to enable students to interact with people in various social contexts.
- (v) to enable students to discuss topics related to their field of study, current issues, future careers, personal interests etc.
- (vi) to improve students' listening comprehension.

Specific objectives of Advanced Spoken English

To develop students' speaking and listening skills by helping them

- (i) to acquire the skills of expressing ideas, viewpoints on various issues which require them to react and participate.
- (ii) to speak before an audience confidently using the correction mode of discourse and forms of address.
- (iii) to give impromptu speeches that manifest well-organised ideas and logical thinking.

- (iv) to participate actively in discussions on general topics by presenting arguments for and against an issue.
- (v) to participate in oral activities such as 'seminars' and 'workshops', and to acquire other related sub-skills, eg how to interrupt, how to ask for clarifications etc.
- (vi) to improve students' listening comprehension skills through lectures, speeches etc.
- (v) to acquire the skill to present term papers, reports etc orally.
- (vi) to improve their general fluency in speech.

Course Outline

Intermediate Spoken English

The students will be taught the basic knowledge of the English sound system, eg vowels, consonants, stress and intonation. Phonetic symbols will be introduced so that students can refer to dictionaries when they encounter difficulties in pronouncing certain words.

Exercises on spoken English will comprise everyday situations such as greetings, thanking, making enquiries and complaints. Since speaking skills can only be taught effectively in a lively, realistic yet relaxed and conducive atmosphere, exercises such as language/word games, roleplay etc which are both stimulating and interesting will be provided. These exercises will be guided and controlled in the first half of the course and emphasis will be on fluency rather than accuracy of the English language.

The second half of the course will bridge the gap between controlled oral activities and free conversation where the latter will be greatly encouraged. Students will be required to construct dialogues with the help of some key words, using more complex grammatical structures such as the use of modal auxiliaries. More complex features including idiomatic expressions characteristic of dialogues and other oral activities will be taught. eg rhetoric underlying effective mode of discourse and eloquence in various situations such as requesting favours, permission, job interviews, speaking in public etc.

Visual stimuli, eg photographs, pictures, wall-charts, map etc will serve as the starting point for oral discussion and this is reinforced by some aural stimuli, usually in the form of recorded speeches and dialogues etc.

These aural/visual 'inputs' will generate open class discussion which will then be readily transferred to small group discussions, pair work, role play, problem solving, games etc.

A good proportion of the class will be conducted in the language laboratory and video-room where recorded oral exercises and recording facilities are available.

Advanced Spoken English

A rapid review of the English sound system will be given in the beginning of the course. There will be exercises on stress, intonation and fluency. Students will also be taught the techniques and rhetoric in speaking in formal situations and ways of saying things which are appropriate for different situations.

Topics for discussion will be more abstract, controversial and challenging. eg topics on social issues, environmental problems, current international affairs etc. Group discussions, debates, mock interviews, impromptu speeches, chairing meetings/seminars/workshops will be among some of the oral activities. Some of the exercises will be video-taped for discussion.

Listening comprehension and note-taking exercises will be based on lectures conducted in English and information conveyed in English in the mass media.

Students will be trained to transfer forms of oral work into different modes, eg reports for speeches, minutes at meetings, information from radio and television programmes etc, using correct format, style and structure, in order to relay messages or information to others or to be kept for future references.

APPENDIX I (2)Samples of Lesson Plans: Intermediate Spoken English

Texts: (i) I Think, You Think, by Alexander, L.G. and Kingbury, R.H.
 (ii) Missing Person (A Radio Play)

Unit 1 Greetings and Starting a ConversationLesson 1

1. Students are presented with four photographs and asked to describe what is happening. The idea of greetings should be elicited and briefly discussed. (10 minutes)
2. Students should now be asked to think about the language of greetings. Language items should be elicited and written on the blackboard. A categorization of formality may be attempted dependant on the ability of the class. (10 minutes)
3. Dialogue 1 (tape 1) should now be presented with as little background information as the teacher thinks desirable. Students should be asked to listen carefully for the 'gist' of the conversation (extensive listening) during the first listening. During the second listening they should try to identify the greetings they hear. By the third listening students should easily be able to answer the comprehension questions. (15 minutes)
4. Any remaining problems of comprehension may be dealt with. (5 minutes)
5. Two transparencies of the dialogue should now be presented, one with only John's side of the dialogue, the other with only Marina's. Only one half at a time will be presented and students will work in pairs to fill in the other half, using a combination of memory and improvization, the latter being particularly stressed. (Students may be told that it does not particularly matter what they say, only that it makes sense.) If time permits, both transparencies may be hidden, and the students are asked to construct the dialogue without any cues. (15 minutes)
6. The handouts containing the dialogues and some general questions about the content of the lessons may now be handed out. (NB These should never be used as a part of the listening exercises. We are teaching listening not reading comprehension.)

Lesson 2

1. Rapid review of Lesson 1. This may be effectively carried out by asking each student to remember one greeting from the previous lesson and write it down on the blackboard. (5-7 minutes)
2. The student should be asked to think about the three most common questions asked when people first meet. The following should be elicited:
 - (i) What's your name? (Discussion point: this is sometimes only implied, as in Dialogue 1)
 - (ii) Where are you from? (Discussion point: this is often answered by stating nationality rather than place.)
 - (iii) What do you do? (Discussion point: this does not mean what you are doing at that actual moment.)

These questions should as far as possible be elicited rather than merely presented. (10-15 minutes)

3. These questions and their answers can be presented in the following manner:
 - (i) "My name's.....What's yours?"
 - (a) Teacher→ Student
 - (b) Student→ Teacher
 - (c) Student→ Student
 - (ii) Write this list on the blackboard:

John is from English.
 Marina is from Malaysia.
 Maria is from Spain.
 Mohammed is from India.

(Many other examples can be provided.)

Then ask "How would these people reply to the question 'Where are you from?'?". Answering with both nationality and place should be practised.

- (iii) Write this list on the blackboard.

Harun teaches in a school.
 Salleh lectures at a university.
 Goh flies aeroplanes.
 Fred drives lorries...etc.

4. If time permits, some cultural discussion about greetings and starting conversations should be encouraged. eg Are there any questions that are considered impolite, by certain cultures, when you first meet? eg You would not ask an Englishman his salary or house rental, but these would be acceptable questions to most Malaysians. The four photographs used in Lesson 1 could be reintroduced. (10-15 minutes)

Lesson 3

1. Rapid review of Lesson 2. (5 minutes)
2. Continuation of discussion begun in 4 (Lesson 2) (10 minutes)
3. Students should be asked to roleplay the following situation in pairs. Students should be instructed to carefully consider the appropriacy of the language. One or two pairs might be asked to present their roleplays to the class. Some general correction of common errors should be made. Students should also be invited to join this process. As this is the first exercise of this type plenty of time should be given for preparation and presentation. (30-40 minutes)

Lesson 4

This will consist of the first lesson of Missing Person. It is advisable to proceed slowly as the students will undoubtedly have some difficulty in comprehending the natural speech presented on this tape. (NB The function practice in Lesson 2 "Making introductions" is a helpful extension of the first Unit of this course.)

Unit 2 Meeting People Informally

Lesson 5

1. Students are told that they will shortly hear a dialogue (Dialogue 2) between four undergraduates from a Malaysian University. Then, a similar procedure as adopted in 3 (Lesson 1) should be followed.
 - (i) first listening for the gist ie extensive listening.
 - (ii) second listening for specific language items ie greetings.
 - (iii) third listening (if necessary) for listening comprehension questions. (20 minutes)
2. Pairwork- using transparencies in the same manner as 5 (Lesson 1) (15 minutes)

3. Students are shown two transparencies and asked to match the appropriate word to the blanks and match the questions to the replies. (15 minutes)
4. The worksheet and tapescript may be given.

Lesson 6

1. Review of Lesson 5. (5 minutes)
2. In groups of three or four students are asked to improvise a dialogue using the same basic situation as Dialogue 2. They are of course free to change names and details and improvise in any way they wish to. The roleplays should then be presented, tape recorded and discussed. Students should be encouraged to offer balanced criticism on each other's work. (50 minutes)

Lesson 7

1. Presentation and discussion of Video Tape No. Beta 37. This collection of short video clips concentrates on greetings and meeting people. It is suggested that it is shown once for general comprehension and comment but then each clips should be shown separately. The basis of the discussion should be centred around cultural issues such as what is and is not acceptable when males and females meet, and the relationship between speakers ie how does the formality/informality of the language indicate the nature of the relationship. Non-verbal and paralinguistic features may also be touched on. Also the teacher may like to discuss when we use "How do you do?" and how we introduce ourselves. eg "Greeting+ Allow me to introduce myself".

This lesson should:

- (i) be a useful opportunity for spontaneous discussion.
- (ii) revise and gather the various teaching points of the course so far. (50-60 minutes)

Lesson 8

Missing Person- Lesson 2.

Unit 3 Meeting People Formally

Lesson 9

1. Students are told that they will shortly hear a dialogue about John's visit to Dr. Salleh. (Dialogue 3) Predictions about the content should be invited. eg "Who is Dr. Salleh?", "Why does John go to see him?" etc. All reasonable suggestions should be accepted and written on the board. (5-7 minutes)
2. Students should now listen:
 - (i) once for the gist and whether their predictions are correct.
 - (ii) secondly for specific language items ie formal greetings and other indications of formality.
 - (iii) thirdly to answer the listening comprehension questions.
 (15 minutes)
3. Pairwork using transparencies 9 + 10 as in 5 (lesson 1) (15 minutes)
4. Intonation and stress. This is introduced formally for the first time, and the students should be given a simple explanation and demonstration of the two concepts. From dialogue 3 the following points should be discussed:
 - (i) stress on "too" in the phrase "Not too bad". What does it indicate about John's attitude?
 - (ii) intonation of "well". What attitude does it show?
 - (iii) What does the stress on "Now" show about the tone of the conversation?
 The teacher may like to demonstrate variations in these particular stress and intonation patterns and ask how this changes the meaning. (15-20 minutes)
5. Teacher should give out handouts entitled "Choosing the right language" Part 1 only and ask the students to read it before Lesson 12.

Lesson 10

1. This lesson is intended as revision, consolidation and reinforcement of Units 1-3. It will take the form of an extended roleplay supplied by the set of roleplay cards. Some information is missing from each of the cards. This is in order to create some semblance of reality. (NB Students should not work from a prepared script but notes may be used. However, improvization should be strongly encouraged.)

2. The students should not discuss what is written but prepare individually (10 minutes), present and record (10 minutes) and then discuss, in their groups, their performance.
3. The class as a whole may then discuss each of the following:
 - (i) appropriateness of language.
 - (ii) stress and intonation.
 - (iii) cultural issues.(NB These opportunities to offer balanced criticism on each others' work should be actively encouraged by the teacher. The students can learn a lot from each other.) (50-60 minutes)